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Professional Pathways for Teacher Educators in Further Education practice: a framework to support professional learning.

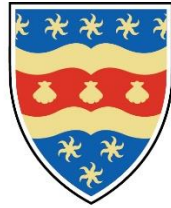
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UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH

Professional Pathways for Teacher Educators in Further Education practice: a framework to support professional learning.

by

Sue Webster

A thesis submitted to University of Plymouth in partial fulfilment for the degree
of

Doctor of Education

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Declaration: At no time during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Education has the author been registered for any other University award without prior agreement of the Doctoral College Quality Sub-Committee.

Work submitted for this research degree at the University of Plymouth has not formed part of any other degree either at the University of Plymouth or at another establishment.

Relevant seminars and conferences were attended at which work was presented, including:

2012 – DPR 12 – exhibition of quilting project (collaborative project) and presentation of related paper.

2013 – Academic poster at IHC/Plymouth Institute of Education Postgraduate Research Conference, University of Plymouth, July 2013.

2013 - DPR 13 – paper: 'Preparing a Pathway of Professional Development for Teacher Educators in the Lifelong Learning Sector'.

2014 - DPR 14 – led a symposium (Exchange and Change: the Art and Craft of Active Communication) – presented a paper: 'A call to adventure: re-awakening social consciousness in a teacher educator'.

2014 - IHC/Plymouth Institute of Education Postgraduate Research Conference, University of Plymouth. Presentation on ideas for research project and methods/methodology.

2015 - Research Into Practice Seminar (RIPS) seminar presentation on research methods and approaches to qualitative investigation at Plymouth College of Art. 18th March 2015.

2015 - IHC/Plymouth Institute of Education Postgraduate Research Conference. Presentation of paper titled 'Patchwork Text'. 20th June 2015.

2015-2016 - Participant researcher in Co-operative Enquiry funded by PedRIO with Denise Summers and Centre for Sustainable Futures, University of Plymouth.

2016 – Presentation at 7th TEAN conference, held in Birmingham. Title: 'Grand Tour, package deal or pilgrimage: imagining frameworks for professional learning'. 5/6th May 2016.

2016 – Presentation and round table seminar titled 'Imagining frameworks for professional learning: making use of an itinerarium?', IHC/Plymouth Institute of Education Postgraduate Research Conference, University of Plymouth. 18th June 2016.

2017 – Delegate at Decolonising Teacher Education Seminar March 2017, University of Exeter, Graduate School of Education.

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Abstract

This project evaluates a proposed framework designed to support professional learning for teacher educators, focusing on Post Compulsory Education & Training, and particularly practices in Further Education. The intention of the framework is to enhance practice and promote professional recognition for people who support others in becoming or developing as teachers: teacher educators. The project proposal is that this can be achieved through engagement with processes of professional learning (Timperley, 2011) in the form of professional *pathways*, defined here as *professional and individual learning journeys supported by principles and research-based recommendations within a recognised framework of underpinning factors*. The theoretical framework for the project is interpretative, based on transformative learning (Cranton, 1994, 2002; ; Mezirow, 1997) with a constructivist epistemology and reflexive ontology (Door, 2014). It builds on previous research (Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013) using new data to develop initial ideas through a methodology of *creative praxis*, representing practices and approaches *where reflexive, innovative thinking and impact on the world are equally important*. The intention is to arrive at a robust, flexible and well-considered framework designed to support the professional formation and development of prospective, new or experienced teacher educators practicing in the Further Education sector.

**Professional *Pathways* for Teacher Educators in Further Education
practice: a framework to support professional learning.**

Contents

1. Introduction: I'm going on this journey because...	9
2. Literature review: mapping the territory by researching what others have seen, planned, discovered, mapped and charted.....	27
a. Communities of learning and social justice	29
b. Creativity, crafting and making.....	36
c. Education and sustainable development	39
d. Individual teacher journeys, identities and transformative learning.....	44
e. Policies and sector documentation	54
f. Professional learning and continuing professional development.....	65
g. Professional identity and teacher educators in FE teacher education	75
h. Research available on teacher education in FE in the UK, and research appropriate to the methodology and methods for this project (Section 3.).....	77
3. Justification for the methodology and methods: selecting the route and planning transport – pages 96-119	96
4. Description of the research setting, its context and participant population: what of the, places, continents, terrain, travellers and populations?	123
a. Prospective, new and experienced teacher educators in FE-related practices	125
b. Auto-ethnographic participation	136
5. Presentation of findings: what did the journey look and feel like - what was discovered? 141	
a. Planning, recording and recounting of the journey by me, a traveller	149
1. The <i>itinerarium</i>	149
2. The travelogue.....	151
b. Dialogue with fellow travellers whilst travelling – teacher educators	157
Group 1. New teacher educators in FE practice.	163
Group 2. Experienced teacher educators in FE practice.....	170
c. Sharing of the experience with professional colleagues and peers during the journey, and also on return – supervisors, examiners and researchers in related areas.....	189
d. Exploring associated literature and theoretical knowledge to help provide context - of the terrain, its history, geography and of previous journeying for planning and during the trip	194
6. Discussion of findings: what has been learned about the terrain, the transport, and the travellers?	196
a. <i>Characteristics and qualities</i>	198
b. <i>Milestones</i>	202

c. Professional learning	207
d. <i>Itinerarium</i>	209
e. Travelogue and portfolio working	210
f. Four-fold model.....	213
7. Conclusion: how was the trip? Was it worthwhile, what went well, what could be done better... what's next...?	215
Appendices 1-9	224
Appendix 1 - Creating a professional <i>pathway</i> : your <i>itinerarium</i>	225
Appendix 2 - Interview questions.....	228
Appendix 3 – Call for participants 26.1.2016.....	230
Appendix 4 – Information Sheet.....	231
Appendix 5 – Original principles and definitions used as the basis for this project	234
Appendix 6 – Revised principles and definitions arising from this project	235
Appendix 7 – Revised <i>itinerarium</i> information sheet.....	237
Appendix 8 – Legend.....	241
Appendix 9 – Pen portraits.....	244
References	246

List of Figures

Figure 1. <i>Part of Tabula Peutingeriana, Konrad Miller's facsimile from 1887</i>	118
Figure 2. <i>Ordnance Survey and leisure maps</i>	152
Figure 3. ' <i>Travelogue Travel Journal</i> ' by Luckies of London (Luckies TM)	153
Figure 4. ' <i>Teacher Educator Professional Pathway Patchwork Text</i> ' wiki	155
Figure 5. ' <i>Teacher Educator Professional Pathway</i> ' wiki: version 2	220

1. Introduction: I'm going on this journey because...

The intention of this research project is to enhance practice and promote professional recognition for teacher educators¹ in post-compulsory education and training. To achieve this, a framework has been designed to support engagement with processes of professional learning (Timperley, 2011), whether as professional formation or development, in the form of professional *pathways*². This project critically examines the framework as proposed, which has a particular focus on practitioners and practices in Further Education (FE).

The notion of professional *pathways* originates from two papers aimed at starting a dialogue around professional recognition for teacher educators in what was then referred to as PCET (Exley, 2010; Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013)³. The hope was to start a process resulting in the creation of a framework to support professional learning for an, as yet, under-researched group of practitioners (Crawley, 2016; Eliahoo, 2016). The question is whether the model of professionalism and the proposed characteristics and qualities of teacher educators in FE practices identified in those two original papers are robust enough to form the basis of a framework. In order to discover more, this project intends developing those tentative beginnings into a workable, flexible and creative approach to professional learning through a critically reflexive review of the available literature, and as an auto-ethnographic engagement based on the

¹ For further definitions and explanations of terms, refer to Appendix 8.

² The term *pathways* will be used throughout and is italicised to signify its particular use and definition - see Appendix 8. The same will be found for the particular use of the terms such as *stopping points* and *places of interest*, as defined in this text.

³ These papers were authored under my previous surname, Exley.

personal experiences of practitioners, as well as my own as engagement with the framework. In this way, the research makes use of an auto-ethnographic methodological approach in terms of it being the lens through which I, as a teacher educator, view the literature and the data gathered, and in terms of my personal experience of an initial engaging with a *pathway*. As described by Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2010, p.online):

When researchers write autoethnographies, they seek to produce aesthetic and evocative thick descriptions of personal and interpersonal experience. They accomplish this by first discerning patterns of cultural experience evidenced by field notes, interviews, and/or artifacts, and then describing these patterns using facets of storytelling (e.g., character and plot development), showing and telling, and alterations of authorial voice.

The 'storytelling' approach taken for this investigation makes use of personal journeying and co-construction of professional identity within a flexible framework designed to help navigate this process. The story is told through this thesis, with all the participants as 'characters' and the plot unfolding as I show and tell about the developments arising from the research. Even the framework itself embodies 'facets of storytelling' through the travelogue (*ibid.*). A storytelling approach is also intended to help avoid over-reliance on a prescribed set of professional standards which could result in a time-bound design with limited currency. It is suggested in this project that, even where devised *by* practitioners *for* practitioners, professional identities which focus on meeting or demonstrating standards can find it difficult to create balance between definition and constraint; stories can help to retain some of the 'aesthetic and evocative thick descriptions of personal and interpersonal experience' (*ibid.*).

In the UK, the FE sector and its practices are variously described and defined as Further Education (FE), Post-compulsory Education & Training (PCE/PCET), Education & Training sector, Post-16 Education & Training, 16+ Education & Training, 19+ Education & Training, Further Education & Skills (FE&S), Lifelong Learning, amongst other terms. Educational practices offered by the sector include vocational training and apprenticeships, academic provision such as GCSEs, foundation degrees and full degrees, industry qualifications, specialist foundation programmes, Adult and Community Learning (ACL), offender learning, Work-based Learning (WBL), Adult Basic Skills, Adult Continuing Education (ACE) – all carried out across a wide range of sites of practice including 14-19 Career Colleges (Career Colleges Trust, 2016). The sector is reported to serve anything from 3 to over 4 million learners annually (Department of Education, 2016; Education and Training Foundation, 2014; Eteach, 2017). For clarity and consistency, this project will use the term Further Education (FE) which is intended to embrace all of the above as a reflection of its complex nature and of the variety, breadth and potential of education practices engaged in by teacher educators in this sector.

The theoretical framework for this project is interpretative, and based on the notion of transformative learning (Cranton, 1994, 2002; ; Mezirow, 1997), predicated on a constructivist epistemology and drawing on a reflexive ontology (Door, 2014). It develops previous research done by Exley & Ovenden-Hope (2013), making use of new data to revise those initial ideas through a

methodology of *creative praxis*⁴ (Allen, 2012; Crouch, 2007) arriving at a framework of support for the professional formation or development of practitioners engaged in teacher education for teachers in the Further Education sector. The research approach is qualitative and interpretive (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013; Crotty, 1998; Punch, 2009; Tummons & Duckworth, 2013), hoping to uphold the principles of the significance of individual journeying, the relevance of collaboration and co-constructive working, and the recognition of shared values. Analysis of material from the literature review, interview data and personal experience as auto-ethnographic engagement is approached systematically using an adaptation of Brookfield's lenses (1995), makes use of processes of content and thematic analysis, some simple coding and, broadly speaking, a constant comparative method (Denscombe, 2010; Silverman, 2013) (Sections 4, 5 and 6). As I am both the researcher and a teacher educator in FE practices, the auto-ethnographic lens of this project runs throughout the whole investigation, balanced by a thematic literature review and underpinned through recognition of the voices of practitioners (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2010; Ellis & Bochner, 2000).

The significance of the auto-ethnographic element as personal experience is noticeable in both the key drivers for this project. One of the drivers for researching this area of practice is that after more than 15 years teaching in this field I still don't have a simple answer when people ask what my job is. To say I

⁴ *Creative praxis* is defined as being: where reflexive, innovative thinking and impact on the world are equally important. Where the term is used but defined differently by other authors it is identified accordingly - see Appendix 8.

am a lecturer in Education precludes the teacher training and education aspect, and to say I 'train teachers' limits the depth of professional engagement, experiences of the people I meet and the qualities of the programmes to which I contribute. My preferred term would be *teacher educator* – and I am happy with the ambiguity of this: that I can be both the 'teacher as educator', and 'educator as teacher'. Since my first 50-hour contract to teach on Certificate in Education (Cert Ed) and Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) courses in 2001, I have been investigating what it means to be a teacher educator in the post-compulsory sector, specifically in Further Education (FE). For the first few years of my role as a teacher educator, there was very little to be found on how to develop as a professional teacher educator in any sector, although research interest was growing for those involved in initial teacher training and education (ITTE) for schools and the compulsory sector. Slowly, over the last decade, research emerged that was being undertaken in the USA (Dinkelman, Margolis & Sikkenga, 2006) and the Netherlands (Swennen & van der Klink, 2009), but again the links between training for schools through higher education programmes was at the core, with little commentary on what is currently known in the UK as FE, or the Further Education & Skills sector (FE&S). Around 2007, a useful document was produced primarily focusing on the role for those in the compulsory sector, *Becoming a Teacher Educator: guidelines for the induction of newly appointed lecturers in Initial Teacher Education*, which was later updated to include those teaching higher education programmes in further education colleges – HE in FE (Boyd, Harris & Murray, 2007; Boyd, Harris & Murray, 2011). Although cognisant of ITTE in Further Education colleges, this

document did not particularly relate to undergraduate or in-service ITTE programmes in these settings, such as those awarded by City and Guilds.

Interest in teacher education in FE has also been supported and developed over the last decade through research networks such as TEAN (Teacher Education Advancement Network) and TELL (Teacher Education in Lifelong Learning). TEAN are based at Cumbria University, and since 2010 their conference has focused on teacher education, producing a peer-reviewed journal and - although, again, the main area of practice represented is the compulsory sector - there is a growing interest in FE practices. TELL are a national network for research, sharing an online platform and organised events across the UK.

In September 2015, a wide-ranging survey on behalf of the International Forum for Teacher Educator Development (InFoTED) emerged concerned with the professional learning needs of teacher educators (TEs) in the UK, Flanders/Belgium, Israel and the Netherlands (Czerniawski, MacPhail & Guberman, 2015). The focus of their project was on teacher educators, their identity as researchers and their needs in developing this aspect of their role (Sections 2.a, 2.d). Although the focus for the InFoTED project was specifically to investigate the research 'needs' of teacher educators, it did cross education sectors and some early findings from their research have relevance to this project.

Initial findings of the InFoTED research project presented at BERA 2015 (British Educational Research Association, 2015), support the appropriate selection of the term 'teacher educator' to identify practitioners throughout this project, as it was the top identifying marker recognised by participants in their research.

Caution is still needed regarding this term, however, as the positive response to this as a term was still under 50%, which might suggest that a unifying, more widely recognised term has not yet emerged amongst practitioners working as professional teacher educators. The early survey findings also show that only 21% of those surveyed identified themselves as part of 'Post 16' teacher education practices, with University (23%) Primary (33%) and Secondary (50%); this indicates that there is work to be done to capture the views of those engaged in education practices that sit alongside the compulsory sector and Higher Education (HE). This conclusion is further supported by the summary points from the BERA presentation which clearly identified that any next steps would include surveying of 'school based TEs', but with no mention of FE practices (Czerniawski, MacPhail & Guberman, 2015).

In FE, there is a historical precedent of teachers having come to teaching from 'industry' and practices being caught between the more centrally organised sector of compulsory education and the autonomy of higher education (Carol & Wolstencroft, 2016). The significance of this is that a situation then arose where, although qualified in terms of skills, knowledge and understanding of their specialist practices, teachers in FE were not always people who had 'done well at school', had experience of further academic study in their specialist field,

nor studied Education as a specialist subject. Some FE teachers had teaching certificates from graduate and post-graduate programmes, or from vocational training courses, but this was not a requirement of the sector. A parallel situation, whereby practitioners from professional backgrounds enter Higher Education as lecturers, has been identified by Turner *et al* (2015) but in this instance the overall level of prior education and academic experience was relatively high. A similar situation was recognised in the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) evaluation of the *FE Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations 2007* (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, 2012). The result of this historical situation was, and is, a mixed population of teachers and trainers some of whom were not trained as teachers or skilled in academic study, some with teaching or training certificates but without any other personal or subject specific academic qualifications, while others had both academic backgrounds and full teaching qualifications.

Unsurprisingly, this was not a new concern. The notion of the professional, or 'semi-professional' (Eraut, 1994), status of teachers in the sector has been debated over decades, finally reaching a point during the 1990s when the situation was deemed to be inadequate, especially for teachers in FE colleges employed and paid by the State. The need for more and clearer accountability was originated in the expectations outlined by the Further Education Staff Development Forum (FESDF) and developed into a national set of standards by the Further Education National Training Organisation - FENTO (Further Education National Training Organisation, 1999). Founder members of FENTO

were teachers, trainers and practitioners from FE intending to focus expectations and tailor qualifications to meet the wider needs of this diverse population of practitioners, whilst enhancing recognition of teacher status for the whole sector (Institute for Learning, 2013).

FESDF was independent of the government, having been a coalition of professional bodies. Also independent of the government, its successor (FENTO) formed in 2002 was, in contrast, a single entity made up of practitioners with a remit to professionalise the sector with strong links to what became the Institute for Learning (FE), known as the IfL (Tummons, 2010). In turn, a few years later in 2005 FENTO was replaced by Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) and gradually qualifications and professional or occupational standards came into focus, now that a single body had been created to oversee professional development and practice (*ibid.*). Along with the centralising of the professional body for the FE sector, it was hoped that through voluntary membership of IfL the notion of a dual professional identity would become established: teachers in the sector recognised as both subject specialists and professional teachers (Institute for Learning, 2011). However, also in 2005, the *Foster Report* deemed this process of professionalising practice too slow, so a framework was created and a related organisation, Standards Verification UK (SVUK), devised a new set of standards to meet the needs of both new and existent teachers, introduced as the New Overarching Professional Standards (LLUK, 2006). This required all teachers in the sector to be fully qualified, appropriate to their role, and to be involved in continuing

professional development (Hillier & Thompson, 2005; Institute for Learning, 2009).

These standards stood until 2014, when they were revised with the intention of creating a set of standards less prescriptive and competence-based regarding subject specialist knowledge (Pye Tait Consulting, 2014). Around the same time a new professional body was formed to replace LLUK. This new professional body, the Education and Training Foundation (to be known as *the Foundation*), recognised more explicitly that teaching and teacher education is practiced by a wide range of people in an equally wide variety of settings within FE (Education and Training Foundation, 2014).

This potted history demonstrates, firstly, that over the last two decades efforts have been made to establish a 'professional' and standards-based practice for the sector; secondly, that although the changes were initially instigated by and for governmental expectations and needs, there is now a stronger sense of sector practitioners as professionals, recognised as holding the expertise to be able to manage and develop their own practices. This is what Eraut suggests is fundamental to the notion of being professional:

The argument for relative freedom from interference is based on unique expertise, moral integrity, confidentiality and protection from political abuse. The protection against unqualified competition is to prevent clients from being deceived when they lack the knowledge to discriminate.

(Eraut, 1994, p.2)

As teachers in FE seek more consistent recognition as professionals, with the associated 'expertise', 'integrity', and 'protection from political abuse', then this

should also be true of the people who prepare them for practice. Therefore, this research project, *Professional Pathways for Teacher Educators in Further Education practice: a framework to support professional learning*, has been specifically designed as an expedition into this particular domain so as to create a new, sustainable and effective way for practitioners to demonstrate and strengthen professional recognition in the field of teacher education in FE. Referring to the four-fold model of professionalism for teacher educators proposed by Exley (2010) (Appendix 8), it has a clear purpose in mind, and that is to enhance professional practices and recognition of teacher educators in and for FE through engagement with processes of formation or development, as professional learning (Timperley, 2011).

The second driver for this project was also a personal one, and is what I would refer to as my 'call to adventure' (Campbell, 1949) (Sections 2.d, 4.b). As a teacher educator myself, I have been very aware of the growing distance between my personal subject specialist knowledge (gained from having been a Registered General Nurse and holding a first degree in Fine Art) and my current teaching practice. I realised that I was heading towards not being competent in the fields of Nursing practice or Fine Art. It was becoming clear to me that as I was being professionalised into my *teacher education* role I was losing competency in terms of my previous subject specialist areas of knowledge and practice. My years of journeying in teacher education were moving me further away from my previously familiar stamping grounds as a registered nurse and an arts practitioner. Eraut's work on notions of professionalism include issues of

competency, practical versus theoretical knowledge and professionalisation (Eraut, 1994). He challenges us to consider the following:

One common assumption is that practical knowledge is context bound, while theoretical knowledge is comparatively free. But is this true? (Eraut, 1994, p.52)

This perspective helped me to reflect on how and why I found myself in a context that no longer supported my theoretical or practical knowledge in these fields... where I felt there was a growing personal need. It also helped consolidate the ideas that had emerged from previous research resulting in one of the aspects of the four-fold model for teacher educators – that of being a ‘curricular subject specialist’ (Exley, 2010, p.25) (Section 6.f).

Eraut goes on to make the case that real understanding and knowledge comes from the context of both forms of knowledge, practical or theoretical, and the interactions between knowledge and context (Eraut, 1994). I was able to see how these models could help me maintain and develop my professionalism (Clow, 2001), in relation to myself as a subject specialist in my own field of practice and in relation to myself as a subject specialist in the field of education (Exley, 2010). This was the deciding factor in the auto-ethnographic element of this project (Sections 2.h, 3, 4, 5); I needed to see how my subject specialist knowledge, both practical and theoretical, could remain a significant part of my professionalism if I was able to travel to these places as a journey of professional learning, and how this might influence my interpretation of the data gathered from others.

Throughout this project the notion of the journey is used figuratively to provide an illustrative perspective for both the project itself and the form that professional learning could take; it makes emblematic use of the voices of practitioners, my own experiences in the field as a teacher educator and existent literature, practices and policies (Seale, 2004)(Sections 3, 4.a). It has been important to include practitioners alongside my personal experiences in an auto-ethnographic research project, as the aim is to bring together ‘the voices of researchers’ with ‘the voices of participants’, through what Clough and Nutbrown call ‘focused conversation’ (2012, p.63~86) – literally and figuratively through interviewing and, potentially, through reflective portfolio working.

The proposal here is that a critically reflexive investigation is needed into professional learning for teacher educators. It is suggested that this process can reasonably be described as being one of taking professional *pathways*, which are defined in this project as *professional and individual learning journeys supported by principles and research-based recommendations within a recognised framework of underpinning factors*. This notion of *pathways* will be used to help explain the processes involved, as well as providing a supporting framework so that they can be analysed critically, creatively and reflexively.

It is significant that this project is fundamentally rooted in ‘processes’ of professional learning, not solely as ‘products’ signifying professional development. Timperley similarly emphasises this, stating that there is a need

for process *over* product, and refers to a structured but flexible approach like this as ‘appreciative enquiry’:

a process of collaborative inquiry based on interviews and affirmative questioning to collect and celebrate ‘good news stories’ and through this identifying other areas and ways in which the school [sic] could become ‘better off’.

(Timperley, 2011, p.118)

This project can be seen as appreciative inquiry, seeking good modelling rather than having a focus on fault-finding and negativity sometimes associated with problem-solving approaches to professional development (Bright, Cooperrider & Galloway, 2006; Cooperrider & Dutton, 1999; Timperley, 2011). The preferred approach has been to aim for collaboration between practitioners and myself as lead investigator, using interviews, aiming at helping prospective, new or experienced teacher educators (Exley, 2010)⁵ identify ‘good’ practice, seek out effective approaches and ways in which their practice can be ‘better off’ (Timperley, 2011, p.118).

For any profession within the current educational paradigm, recognition of having engaged in a process like this is required to be acknowledged through certification⁶. It is hoped and anticipated that any such mark of achievement is not what defines the act: that a teacher is not seen to have ‘succeeded’ simply

⁵ For clarification, prospective teacher educators are those not yet in post, new teacher educators having up to 3 years of experience in-post, and experienced teacher educators over 3 years’ experience in-post - see Appendix 8.

⁶ Since the start of this project, the professional body for teaching practice in the FE sector, Education and Training Foundation, has added a webpage stating that, although pilot studies have been commissioned, ‘Currently there are no qualifications or standard support packages for those who deliver teacher training for the Further Education (FE) sector.’ <http://www.etf-foundation.co.uk/supporting/support-practitioners/training-fe-teacher-trainers/> (Accessed: 26 May 2017)

by completing the journey. Rather, accreditation should recognise that the person - having engaged in devising their *Teacher Educator Professional Pathway* for Further Education (TEPP-FE), and having journeyed to given points or sites across a terrain - returns to their career path having been made 'different' through that participation. In this way, the notion of professional learning, within a supportive framework, is predicated on a theoretical framework of:

transformative learning (Cranton, 2002; Illeris, 2009; Mezirow, 1997); of a constructivist epistemology, in that knowledge is based on a personally constructed understanding of the world and 'events can be construed in multiple ways' (Tennant in Jarvis & Parker, 2005, p.104); and of reflexive ontology, which assumes 'a close relationship between researcher and focus, both set in a particular context' (Door, 2014, p.59).
(Webster, 2015, p.1)

Any such expedition is a journey into both familiar and unfamiliar territory, where each may become the other, but always an activity where (unless purposefully wishing to be dis-located from one's surroundings) having a map of the terrain would prove helpful, if not life-saving. Therefore, a vocabulary of maps and mapping, of itineraria, stopping points, features, travellers, charting, journeying, travelogues and pathways will be used to guide, explain and review the process. Throughout this project, the use of the terms map and mapping of a *pathway* will change in nature according to the purpose of its role. At times, it will refer to the record or repository of discovery and experience as in Baudrillard's travelogue of America (1989), the charts created by early sea-farers and the itineraria of Roman travellers. At other times it will represent the experiences in the form of Baudrillard's second-order of simulacra – not actually being the real-world experience itself, but representing it with the purpose of

articulating the journey and in such detail and richness that the difference between them 'can no longer be discerned, so that map, in a sense, has become as real as the real' (Lane, 2009, p.84). The notion of the *pathway* as not simply a noun but also embodying the action of journeying, is also reflective of Deleuze's 'notions of mapping research as a way of making visible 'the image of thought' and new possible organisations of reality' (Cristancho & Fenwick, 2015, p.129). The 'maps' illustrated in Cristancho & Fenwick's article echo the possibilities for participants in a *pathway* being able to illustrate and articulate their experiences of professional learning in ways which express the experience of the process and at the same time can be seen to represent engagement as recordable events.

Parallels will be drawn in this project to journeys and journeying as described by Campbell (1949) and Murdock (1990), both of whom also use imagery in their examination of the processes and events involved. Campbell and Murdock offer ways to help articulate the experiences of individuals going through processes of change, who arrive back from their journeying, transformed, with gifts to share with others and with new abilities to engage with the world more effectively. The individual is transformed as a 'champion of things becoming, not of things become...'; of process over product (Campbell, 1949, p.243).

Campbell describes the sharing aspect as being the 'power to bestow boons on his [sic.] fellow man' (1949, p.30), and Murdock as engagement with the 'larger quest of bringing people together', the ongoing and greater journey for us all (Murdock, 1990, p.11). I believe that both notions, bestowing of boons and the

bringing of people together, have their place in a professional learning journey due to the nature of the characteristics, qualities and practices particular to the teacher educator. Teacher educators are practitioners who can 'bestow boons', but contemporary learning theory also suggests that learning and teaching are most effective when not overly reliant on didactic transmission but rather when constructivist and collaborative in nature.

By attending to both approaches, instructive and constructivist, this research project will be aiming to avoid any misapprehension that either all 'constructivist, discovery, problem-based, experiential, and inquiry-based teaching' (Kirschner, Sweller & Clark, 2006, p.75) is *good* or that all instruction and transmission models are *bad*. Neither has the answer alone: as Mayer points out, constructivist approaches can lead to a 'fuzzy and unproductive world of ideology' and leave the learner poorly supported and vulnerable to 'misconceptions or incomplete or disorganized knowledge' (Kirschner, Sweller & Clark, 2006, p.84). Challenging prevailing beliefs and practices in learning and teaching requires courage (Palmer, 1998), as do the journeys of Campbell and Murdock's heroes and heroines. The notion that learning, and teaching, can be represented figuratively through comparison with the heroic journey is an epistemological position that I hold dear. Whether travelling on a predefined A-to-B route, journeying with flexible timetables and amendable stopping points, or wandering flâneur-like journeys can be paralleled to the processes and products of learning - and participation in travel countenances, and even creates, change. Without change there has been no learning, and without the

sharing of the newly acquired knowledge, skills or understanding there is no purpose - no 'so what' - therefore both Campbell's hero and the Murdock's heroine have a place on this journey into professional learning for teacher educators on FE.

The findings of the process and experiences of this project are reflexively reviewed throughout, echoing Glaser and Strauss's grounded theory approach (Denscombe, 2010; Silverman, 2013) and their 'constant comparative method' to achieve 'thick description' of the experiences and contexts associated with the research (Geertz, 1973). This is in keeping with the qualitative approach, methods and techniques used in completion of this project. The project has also taken into account the five characteristics of research with teacher educators suggested by Lunenberg & Willemse (2006) discussed in Section 3 (also Sections 2.a, 2.f, 2.g, 4.a).

In summary, the objectives of this research project can be described as being: to bring about informed development of the notions of professional learning for teacher educators; to promote professional recognition for teacher educators in FE; to research the use of a creative approach to professional learning through *pathways* aimed at enhancing professional practice, exemplified through a variant of the *patchwork text* (Winter, Parker & Ovens, 2003). It is hoped that the results may also have implications for other fields of professional learning and practice.

2. Literature review: mapping the territory by researching what others have seen, planned, discovered, mapped and charted

As a review of the available literature, this process has been undertaken in the form of researching what others have seen, found, planned, discovered, mapped and charted in relation to the themes and purpose of this project. Exploring and examining the literature has revealed the wealth, and paucity, of resources available across a range of selected subject areas. The review has been categorised in eight sections in order to make sense of what is, when taken overall, an embarrassment of riches in terms of texts and related documentation. Due to the focus of this project, these themes necessarily overlap as is explained and examined in this review. I have therefore made use of an idea put forward by Griffiths (2009), who starts the BERA version of her paper on critical approaches to qualitative educational research with the simple but effective explanation, that her contents pages for the article:

... are listed in alphabetical order because the issues are interrelated. The order in which they are used will depend on the particular needs and interests of the person referring to them.
(Griffiths, 2009, p.online)

I feel that the same approach is entirely suited to this project which purposefully pursues a non-linear, layered approach to learning. The sections and themes of the literature review overlap and in doing so do not 'duplicate' but enrich the narrative, enabling additional perspectives to be brought to the resources and works identified. Therefore, allowing that these are not discreet but generalised, the section themes for the literature reviewed are as follows:

- Communities of learning and social justice
- Creativity, crafting and making

- Education and sustainable development
- Individual teacher journeys, identities and transformative learning
- Policies and sector documentation
- Professional learning and continuing professional development
- Professional identity and teacher educators in FE teacher education
- Research available on teacher education in FE in the UK, and research appropriate to the methodology and methods for this project (Section 3)

In the case of this project the literature review has played a significant part as a way of mapping the territory through investigating what others have seen, found, planned, discovered, mapped and charted. A deep and reflexive reading of the available literature can actually challenge the researcher's question as being apposite or even relevant, and can, as Clough and Nutbrown say, result in 'making the familiar strange' (2012, p.47). The bump in the road, therefore, can occur early or late in the research project, as the literature is reviewed and explored more and more deeply. In the case of this research project, almost without fail, the reading as it was discovered and as it unfolded actually smoothed the road – at every turn the review of the available literature seemed to help the research gain more traction. Some of the early motivations for undertaking this doctoral project gained momentum and the choice of this as a journey of learning felt increasingly as if it was one worth taking and as investment for future research.

The use of a literature review helps to reinforce the research vehicle against bumpy roads and breakdowns, but in particular it needed the review of literature to bring rigour to the early ideas as a much-needed check that the motivations

for this project weren't based on unfounded assumptions about the sector, practitioners or practices. Silverman articulates the importance of this, echoing the experience of this project, when he states:

The danger is that you will treat such a literature review as an academic duty rather than as something really relevant to your research project. (Silverman, 2013, p.46)

a. Communities of learning and social justice

The relevance of this section of the literature review is that it is aimed at supporting engagement with a specific audience of practitioners who, it is hoped, will move from being an audience-in-waiting to active participants in a process of professional learning – a community of people. And in the terms of this project and its methodology it includes the aim of listening to and hearing participant voices as active members of that community, communicating their shared values, encapsulated in the notion of social justice.

The idea of the group of practitioners represented by the participants, including the researcher as auto-ethnographer, being a community needs some clarification. The numbers of practitioners involved may be small in comparison to the number of teacher practitioners, but as this project aims to make clear, they are definable as a body of professionals with shared values, characteristics and qualities. Although focused on FE sector educators, this project is supported through reference to the five characteristics recommended by Lunenberg & Willemse when undertaking research with teacher educators in

compulsory education practice (Appendix 8). The relevant characteristic, in this instance, is that the research should make:

Efforts to enhance collective learning through collaboration and joint reflection on the design of the study and, in a wider context, by writing for the community of teacher educators.
(Lunenberg & Willemse, 2006, p.96)

To this end, it is helpful to look at notions of 'community' and 'learning communities', and their relation to social justice as a professional value. It is useful to consider these notions of community as possible sites for reflexive professional development but not in isolation but, rather, alongside others involved in the processes: 'managers, teachers and learners' (Gale, Turner & McKenzie, 2011, p.160). As Lunenberg & Willemse identify the desirability of collaborative and joint reflective practices, Gale, Turner and McKenzie (2011) also promote the benefits of this as an enrichment of practice, where managers, teachers and learners exchange and in turn challenge, augment, and re-conceptualise. Praxis, in a Freirean sense, is achieved through engagement, 'not only [in] the intellectual and the vocational but also the affective and the ethical work of the subject as a whole' (*ibid.*, p.160).

Dewey's writing suggests that communities are not simply created by people working alongside each other, but that they need to have a shared understanding and a personal, and willing, commitment to achieve the 'common end' in order to be recognisable as a community. He states that if effective communication were achieved and individuals were all 'cognizant of the common end and all interested in it so that they regulated their specific activity in view of it, then they would form a community' (Dewey, 1916/2011, p.7). Initial

research findings from an earlier paper related to this project suggested that although good communication skills are cited as a quality to be expected, along with a love of teaching and respect for students, the 'common end' is not very clear (Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013) . This is an aspect of the principles of professional learning as *pathways* that this project hopes to clarify.

Hildebrand, writing about Dewey, identifies the three common factors that help define a community as being: that the grouping is 'interactive or associative' in nature, and that there is 'shared action' as a result of shared 'values'

(Hildebrand, 2008, p.113). These are summed up in Dewey's assertion that:

Wherever there is conjoint activity whose consequences are appreciated as good by all singular persons who take part in it, and where the realization of the good is such to effect an energetic desire and effort to sustain it in being just because it is a good shared by all, there is in so far a community.

(Dewey, 1927/2016, p.176)

Dewey's assertions appear to have been met by this project, as proposed, by attempting to create a cooperative or collaborative approach to the process of engagement with a *pathway*, giving shared ownership of the planning and procedures involved in the creation of it to the participant alongside the researcher. This includes the purposefulness of aiming to achieve professional formation or development through participation in a *pathway*. However, there is still the notion of 'shared values' – and this is of concern because if *the intention of this project is to enhance practice and promote professional recognition for teacher educators in post-compulsory education and training* (Section 1), articulation of the shared values in question is essential. To avoid unresolvable conflicts between the intentional purposefulness of the research with its

collaborative intentions may mean that the values of the researcher and of the participants will need revision to achieve a balance. If the values of the researcher and the participants are out of balance, then the voice of the participants may not be heard, and the researcher's aims misconstrued. To help ameliorate this potential disharmony, the language of the proposal, information sheets and in the questions used in the interviews has been drawn from previous practitioner responses (Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013). Similarly, including my personal and professional experience in this research project presents, at least, the potential of a shared experience and articulation of associated values as a common purpose is pursued (Sections 2.h, 3, 4, 5).

Wenger brought forward the notions of community in terms of professional practice in his writings in the 1990s. In his final chapter on Education, Wenger seems to agree with Dewey that communities and individuals have to be recognised and to be working together for a common purpose to be more than merely a process of 'socialization' (Wenger, 1998, p.263). In the first part of the same text, Wenger's refined definition of a community *of practice* suggests that because the community is held together by their engagement with each other, shared beliefs, or values, are not a prerequisite; in fact, they could be inhibitive in terms of the capacity of the community to be as effective as possible. The suggestion is that beliefs, values, meanings need only be addressed if they are preventing the effectiveness or integrity of the community, and that dealing with these experiences can strengthen and enhance the community. He appears to be saying that a community can be effective when it agrees to disagree, not

needed to have entirely mutually shared beliefs and values. Like Dewey, Wenger's idea leads us to consider a community of this type as dynamic and interactive, but he develops this idea further by suggesting that these processes can create 'occasions for the production of new meanings' – ones, therefore, which couldn't have been 'shared' before, because they hadn't yet revealed themselves (Wenger, 1998, p.82-85).

The significance of this for the development of, and engagement with, a *pathway* is that it will benefit from being a shared or collaborative experience, and that this will be important to the whole process. Even if a person wishes or prefers to engage with a learning process individually, in order to maintain the possibilities for new meanings and understanding to emerge, the inference here is that, overall, an element of sharing and collaboration will be beneficial. For teacher educators, who work with many other people in the course of their practice, how can a sense of belonging to that group, and a willingness to share, be promoted? It appears to be the case that participants in a *pathway* should be encouraged to work collaboratively, and to share ideas and aspects of the process with others, in whatever measure is felt to be most beneficial to them. That is to say, the participant should be able to reflexively consider how much of their journey they will take 'alone', and how much they travel 'with'. This encouragement to share and opportunity for collaborative practice may also help to establish a sense of community between practitioners and the wide range of people they meet in practice, whilst undertaking a *pathway* and in the

longer term. In turn, this has the potential to support effective professional learning.

Hughes identifies three areas of 'identity congruence', or confidence in a sense of belonging, that are thought to require attention if an experience such as being part of a community or engaged in a process of professional learning is to be effective: social identity congruence, operational identity congruence and knowledge-related identity congruence (Hughes, 2010). Essentially, participants who feel socially appreciated, operationally active and able to share their knowledge will be able to participate fully in the learning process. However, Hughes' research found that when engaged in formal learning, social identity congruence is not as essential as thought, and that difference can be an asset. In fact, the suggestion is that social identity congruence can be excluding and limit the growth of operational effectiveness and knowledge, leading to the notion that in order to be effective, and in Wenger's terms also have integrity, engagement with a professional *pathway* is not necessarily dependent upon a social collaboration. A sense of community, therefore, is more likely when built on operational identity congruence and knowledge-related identity congruence and the opportunity for participants to engage in the development of their own path. Design of a personal *pathway*, defining the *stopping points* and identifying features as is relevant to individual practices and developing understandings would seem an appropriate approach for a framework for professional learning which is illustrated through the notion of the *itinerarium* - an ancient form of topological map (Davis, N.D.; Dilke, 1987) (Section 3).

In terms of shared values, therefore, we could conclude that although social justice may be lurking in the characteristics and qualities underlying the framework for *pathways* for professional learning, it may be presumptive to make the assertion that a shared value of 'social justice' is prerequisite.

In 1967, Snyder suggested that there was a difficulty in Education when it comes to 'dealing effectively with social values' when values are not fixed (Snyder, 1967, p.437). He identified that when working with adolescents, for example, approaches that impose 'rules of "shalls" and "shall nots" [...] have resulted in a failure to handle problems insightfully in a changing world' (*ibid.*, p.443). His concern was that society and institutions in society, such as Education and Medicine (Calman, 2004), are not always running at the same pace of change as the social groups in which they reside, and that this can create conflict in terms of shared values. Dewey would suggest that this might cause problems and limit the establishment of 'community', yet Wenger seems to consider this a part of the process of society building into community, able to deal with what Snyder refers to as 'emergent values' (Snyder, 1967, p.439). If this is the case, then stating what the shared values *should* be might, instead, limit an emergent and resilient community. Rather, by using terms such as 'characteristics and qualities' to help define the framework for a process of professional learning, perhaps the participant can then discover and grow to understand not only their existent beliefs and values but also be alert to emergent ones, and to the beliefs and values of others.

In summary, even if distributional or relational social justice may be a deeply significant discourse in our time it could be problematic to insist that this is a specified area for exploration for someone on a professional *pathway*. Instead, it is anticipated that including visits to clearly identified *places of interest* and *stopping points* at which to reflect on particular teacher educator characteristics and qualities will enable individual participants to engage in these matters appropriately to their own beliefs and values – and perhaps, through the process, discover emergent ones, as well (Gewirtz, 1998; Young & Nussbaum, 2011).

b. Creativity, crafting and making

The definition of craft and crafting in this project is of *creative, skilful and purposeful making*. The proposition is that crafting is not making something purely for the love or sake of making, solely for its intended aesthetic meaning, ‘a nostalgia for lost skills or work’ (Miller in Charny, 2011, p.15); nor is it the explicit demonstration of manual or intellectual complexity. Rather, it is these things variously, bringing them together to produce something in the world which is innovative, well-made, purposeful, and aesthetically engaging at one and the same time. Crafting can be utilised as a way of understanding the world when realised through the notion of *creative praxis*, where reflexive, innovative thinking and impact on the world are equally important (Allen, 2012; Crouch, 2007; Prasad, 2015).

I would suggest that the significance and recognition of the power of craft, and of 'creative praxis', was an element of Marx's theoretical position in relation to its antithesis, his notion of alienation, and his view of human beings as fundamentally creative producers: '*homo faber*' (Prasad, 2015, p.120).

According to Prasad (2015, p.120):

The notion of *homo faber* is vital to any discussion of alienation in any historical materialism. According to Marx, work is an act of creative praxis and a quintessential human attribute (Gorman, 1982) that is primarily realized within the labour process itself.

Marx is cited as having made the case for work and creativity being inseparable in terms of their significance for meeting human needs and desires, not just for the individual but in terms of impact on the world, whether socially or environmentally (Avineri, 1968; Gorman, 1982; Prasad, 2015). Effective work, good labour, must be cognisant of its social, political, environmental and personal impact; it should enable and demonstrate creative acts in the world and be able to meet society's needs, as Marx defines them. According to Avineri's understanding of Marx, '*homo faber*' expresses truth to its 'species-being' when involved in labour as 'work upon the objective world' (Marx in Avineri, 1968, p.73). If deprived of this expression, humanity is unable to engage in a process fundamental to its being, whereby production and reproduction 'changes not only the objective conditions [in which they work ...] but the producers change with it, by transforming and developing themselves in production, forming new powers and new conceptions, new modes of intercourse, new needs, and new speech' (*ibid.*, pp.73-74). Labour, work, crafting, enacted by a social and communal individual, are the means by which

homo faber expresses its essential being, creating and recreating itself, developing through producing – through ‘creative praxis’ (*ibid.*, pp.86-87).

Since Marx’s writings in the 19th century, the recognition of crafting as a social or political force has ebbed and flowed, and in the early 21st century the power of crafting is again receiving more immediate attention. Through texts, exhibitions and social media there is evidence of a revival in the notion of craft and crafting as a positive force. This new engagement with craft is being demonstrated through movements such as ‘creative activism’ (Lobb, 2016) or ‘craftivism’ (Corbett, 2014; Greer, 2008), in terms of crafting for health, well-being and societal expression (Brody, 2016; Korn, 2013; Press & Cusworth, 1998; Riley, Corkhill & Morris, 2013; Sennett, 2012; Stalp, 2007) and crafting as a way of thinking and being in a complex world, regardless of whether traditional or non-traditional materials are used in the process (Adamson, 2007; Crawford, 2009; Gauntlett, 2011; Sennett, 2008). An exhibition in 2011 made this point specifically: titled ‘Power of Making – The importance of being skilled’, the Victoria and Albert Museum collaborated with the Crafts Council and showed a wide range of work intending to challenge and examine attitudes and per-conceptions of what crafting means in the 21st century (Charny, 2011).

For this project, the notion of crafting as a principle, as ‘*creative praxis*’ (Allen, 2012; Crouch, 2007; Prasad, 2015), is demonstrated through innovative, purposeful and creative processes. If well-crafted, skilfully engaged with, the journey undertaken by the participant in a *pathway* will be an effective one.

Therefore, a well-designed framework for their travels will help them fully immerse themselves in the process, and finally articulate their experiences convincingly and with confidence. In short, they will be crafting their *pathway* as the making of something creative, purposeful and with skill.

c. Education and sustainable development

As with so many terms, ‘sustainability’ needs to be narrowed down and clearly defined to be of use in supporting the claims in this project. For the framework to support professional learning as proposed here, the idea of sustainability particularly relates to the participants and their engagement with the processes involved.

At first glance, the relation between educational practices and sustainability seems fairly straightforward. Terms such as ‘Education for Sustainable Development’ (ESD), ‘Sustainability Education’ (SE), and ‘Education for Sustainability’ (EfS) are becoming well-known, seeking to raise consciousness of the link between educational practice and environmentally, economically, socially and politically sustainable practice. UNESCO⁷ have been at the forefront of this debate, making use of awareness-raising programmes such as the ‘United Nations Decade of ESD (2005-2014)’ and the more recent ‘Global Action Programme’ (GAP) on ESD which ‘seeks to generate and scale-up concrete actions in ESD [...] intended to make a substantial contribution to the post-2015 agenda’ (UNESCO, 2015, p.online).

⁷ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

However, to be helpful to this project the focus on the relevance of issues of sustainability to a framework for professional learning for teacher educators in FE must be more precise. The significant notion here is of the 'sustainable self'. A key text on this perspective of sustainability and sustainable development is from Murray (2011), who makes the point in the clearest way that I have found, that we cannot separate our professional selves from our personal selves when dealing with issues of sustainability. This both echoes and contrasts with the points that Wenger makes around communities of practice (1998) (Section 2.a), suggesting that seeking shared values may actually be detrimental to the processes of developing practice. The implication is that maintaining our personal as well as professional identities should not necessarily be dis-entangled, instead we should recognise the complexity and, pragmatically, deal with this entanglement of differences and commonalities as they pertain to the matters being examined. For example, the ways in which we identify ourselves and our values may sometimes be in contrast to how we are represented or identified by others (Sections 2.a, 2.d). For teacher educators in FE practices, our professional identity may be largely defined by job specifications, and sector specific Professional Standards and Codes of Practice (Education and Training Foundation, 2016a; Higher Education Academy, 2015a; Society for Education and Training, 2016a), but our personal values and perceptions of characteristics such as 'expertise' (Beijaard, Verloop & Vermunt, 2000, p.online) are integral, intertwined and, I would argue, cannot be dis-entangled from the professional. This is borne out when looking at the qualities and characteristics of a teacher

educator that were identified by practitioners themselves in previous research (Sections 1, 3).

Along with Wenger, I would suggest that, rather than trying to 'resolve' this personal/professional intertwining, instead we recognise it, engaging with any seeming conflicts or challenges only as they arise, are relevant or significant to the sustainability of engagement in a given situation; in this instance, effective professional learning and practice. To try to resolve or fix identity will more likely distract and frustrate: essentially, this project takes the position that our personal and professional selves are shaped *by* and *with* our understanding of ourselves, and *by* and *with* how others identify us. For the purposes of this project, identities should be read as 'intertwined', as described by Beijaard, Verloop & Vermunt (2000) summarised by Reeves (2009, p.35):

This negotiation of identity happens continually in sustained relationships as well as in brief encounters. [...] As a predictable outcome of an identity that is discursively constructed, the positions people take up for themselves are intertwined with the positions they ascribe to others (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005, Harré and Moghaddam, 2003, Johnson, 2006 and Wilkinson, S., & Kitzinger, C. 2003).

As with this project, Murray's text on our sustainable selves, in relation to our identities, has something to contribute to our personal and professional selves whether as educators, students, industry-based professionals or the general public. Murray offers a framework for personal and professional development that can be used as a learning experience 'accounting for around 30 training hours if all the activities are fully undertaken' (Murray, 2011, p.xi). Murray declares that:

People working in the professions have much to offer if they apply their professional and vocational competencies to sustainability ends using skilful means.
(*ibid.*, p.211)

And I agree with that position. But more significantly, I see the link between the proposed framework for professional learning and sustainability as being related to the characteristics and qualities, and the values, of teacher educators.

Essentially, professional learning should explicitly consider our sustainable selves. In terms of education and sustainable development, teacher educators can effectively approach this through *creative praxis*, where reflexive, innovative thinking and impact on the world are equally important. Through critical, reflexive examination of the elements of our practices and our own characteristics and qualities - challenging and questioning them, experimenting and seeking innovative solutions - sustainability becomes central to our practice, transforming both it and ourselves 'through further action and critical reflection' (Freire Institute, 2016, p.online). Taking the position that professional learning and our personal development are intertwined, for our practices to be as authentic as possible, we need self-awareness and professional insight. Ball refers to the importance of authenticity for practitioners in his writing on teacher professionalism, and links it to perceptions of what constitutes authentic practice particularly when faced with notions of performativity (Ball, 2003). He also notes the difficulties of using a word like 'authentic' with its challenges and assumptions, and explains his use of the word, so:

With all the modernist dangers it forebodes I will refer to the pre-reform professional - as an authentic professional. Where authenticity rests on the value of reflection and the ever present possibility of indecision [...] (Ball, 2004, p.online)

Similarly, professional learning and personal development are woven more strongly if sustainable as practices; for authentic professional practice the processes for professional learning and personal development must also be sustainable ones in the sense of our engagement with them, as well as their impact on our working and personal lives. Murray notes the relevance of this to educational practices, and in particular to universities, stating that:

In universities, there is an immense and as yet untapped scope to enhance sustainability performance in relation to their prime output, graduates. While many universities offer specific sustainability-related programmes and stand-alone sustainability modules, few, if any, infuse sustainability throughout the entire curricula.
(Murray, 2011, p.226)

... and Plymouth University has endeavoured to be one of the few, providing staff and students information resources (Plymouth University, 2016a; Plymouth University, 2016b) and creating the *Plymouth Compass*. For the purposes of this project the *Plymouth Compass* is a useful tool with which to demonstrate the link between professional development and sustainable practices by identifying 'key attributes in four broad areas of your life' (Plymouth University, 2016c). The four areas are being a citizen, a professional, a learner and an individual, and each has its particular attributes as well as interconnections. There are detailed elements in all four areas, with some seen as necessarily overlapping and certainly not mutually exclusive. For example, many of the attributes mirror those identified as elements of this project: specialist subject knowledge and expertise, creativity, critical thinking, effective verbal and written communication, sustainability and, as identified in the interviews, resilience (Plymouth University, 2016c) (Section 5).

Although sometimes seen as being focused on 'green' issues, ESD in initial teacher education and training in FE, specifically, can offer more than just an environmental perspective (Jones, Selby & Sterling, 2010; Martin, Summers & Sjerps - Jones, 2007; Summers, 2010; Summers & Cutting, 2016; Summers & Turner, 2011). It has the capacity to help us articulate the importance of our sustainable selves, our values and responsibilities, professionally and personally (Webster & Webster in Summers & Cutting, 2016). In education practice, notably the preparation and continued development of teachers in FE, values of curiosity, courage, creativity and commitment have been cited as critical to effective practice (*ibid.*). These are values which underpin both the personal and professional self, supporting resilience and reflexivity. They are values which helping to sustain our practices as *creative praxis*, and to ask questions of our roles in that practice, of our epistemological positions and of our impact – and how sustainable these are now and in the future. On these points this section has close correlations to the points raised in sections 2.a and 2.b.

d. Individual teacher journeys, identities and transformative learning

In the early stages of this project, I considered representing the whole project, its definition and experience of a *pathway*, as a *patchwork text* (Winter, Parker & Ovens, 2003). This was largely driven by my personal rather than professional interest in crafting and textile crafts in particular. When reading Jacobs' *The Friday Night Knitting Club* (2007), the device of using knitting terms and short descriptors as section headings had confirmed for me the link

between craftwork or making and other activities, whether structuring the writing of a novel or a research project. This is also a metaphorical approach, offering the reader figurative, relational ideas to bring parallel and enriching perspectives to the unravelling of the tale; such use of language enhancing immersion in the experience of the story.

The metaphorical idea of the 'patchwork' and 'patchworking' can be a strong one – especially if already familiar with shared definitions and uses of the term itself. However, this association is not consistently viewed positively, and sometimes pejorative connotations might limit its possibilities in terms of a widely accessible vehicle for a framework for professional learning. For some it would be positive and welcoming, for others irrelevant and even detrimental to their engagement with a *pathway*.

Metaphorical use of terms can allow examination and interpretation of an idea, whilst remaining precise, even giving clarity to complex ideas in a way that deeper and more detailed description simply serves to muddy. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) draw on Eisner (1991) suggesting that metaphor is potentially powerful and effective in that it 'defies the 'one-size-fits-all' approach to a topic' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.380). However, the language of gendered crafting (Parker, 1984) - patchwork, embroidery, lacemaking - may have a limited appeal. An example of this could be attributed to the notion of the *patchwork text* format for assessment which has had limited uptake since its research-based introduction by Winter, Ovens, *et al* (Dalrymple & Smith, 2008; Ovens,

2003; Winter, Parker & Ovens, 2003). Through further investigation, and continued review of the available reading considered in further detail in Section 2.d, a useful alternative emerged, that of the process and experience of learning as being one of journeying, rather than a patchwork.

For participants to be able to be able to achieve high quality and apposite professional learning in their individual professional *pathway* (Section 2.f), they will need to be offered a framework that facilitates the process and provides the opportunity for immersing themselves in this experience. If figurative language can support this expectation it will need to be accessible and adaptable. The approach being taken here is that where individual learning, through cooperative design and negotiation, is felt to be 'owned' by the participant it is more likely to be effective. When considered from this perspective the figurative language of travelling and journeying has wider appeal and possibilities than that of patchwork, and is one which has an existent underpinning body of theoretical work.

Individual teacher journeys, developing professional identities and nurturing our professional selves are now well-reported themes within qualitative research. Importance and relevance has been given to the phrase 'professional identity' from the start of this project, and it is here that a point of clarification can be made. If the process as suggested by this project can be transformative then it requires that there is something to transform, in this instance the professional self. Section 2.a refers to Hughes's work on identity congruence, and cites three

forms that this can take: social identity congruence, operational identity congruence and knowledge-related identity congruence (Hughes, 2010). It goes on to suggest that a focus on two of Hughes's notions - of operational identity congruence and knowledge-related identity congruence - are more appropriate to this project and the ideas supporting the development of a professional *pathway*. But, this still doesn't make clear what is meant by 'identity' or, for that matter, what is meant by 'professional'. Succinctly, this project is concerned with development of the professional self by engaging with an investigation into one's professional identity, recognisable by oneself and by others, and seeking to augment this perception. In doing so this project has to also recognise that these terms remain contestable.

Professional identity could be defined, and contested, through processes of recognition by others or by oneself. Definitions of what constitutes 'professional' might include compliance with a code of practice, being merited with specific qualifications or awards, or being identified with particular behaviours; equally, these definitions can impinge on perceptions of identity both professionally and personally (Timperley, 2011). Contemporary writing continues to question notions of professionalism and professional identity in for teacher educators – including the challenges and expectations that can come from moving from perceptions of self as practitioner to that of lecturer, for example (Wood, Farmer & Goodall, 2016). Similarly, a critical position is being maintained when reviewing differing definitions of professionalism in relation to FE practices, and yet progress is slow in reaching change in this area, as evidenced by assertion

that: 'What constitutes professionalism in the further education (FE) sector, though high on the political and policy agenda, often remains opaque and contested among those on the ground' (Gleeson *et al.*, 2015, p.78).

Izadinia (2014) offers a useful examination of these notions in a review of related literature, concluding, as so often seems the case, that the development of teacher educators' professional identities remains an area in need of further research. The paper also notes that there is a concern that terms are not fixed, that they are 'vague' with regard to definitions of identity, and even more so of professional identity (*ibid.*, p.427). However, Izadinia makes only brief mention of related concerns: that when complex terms become defined they can become exactly that – fixed and therefore limiting, and that definitions can have moral and ethical connotations (Fitzmaurice, 2011; Wenger, 1998).

Nevertheless, one of the conclusions of Izadinia's paper does support the discussion around professional identities in this project:

The development of a professional identity has been recognised as a central process in becoming a teacher educator (Timmerman 2009) because there is a close connection between identity and practice. (Izadinia, 2014, p.427)

In keeping with this conclusive point, the definitions for what is seen as 'professional' for this project are derived from current practice within the sector and the four-fold model (Exley, 2010) (Appendix 8 and Sections 1, 3, 6.f). For this project, a practitioner employed in a role of teacher educator within an education or training setting that is covered by a code of practice such as that of the Society for Education and Training (2016a) or Higher Education Academy

(2015a) would be seen as a professional in that setting. In terms of having a professional *identity* in that role, this would be defined by the indicators above as well as the practitioner's own definition or description of themselves. It is in this area, of supporting practitioners defined as professional teacher educators by their employment, that the creation of a framework as a professional *pathway* is seen as being beneficial in helping practitioners to more confidently identify, develop and articulate their professional identity.

The project also recognises that by creating a professional *pathway*, and anticipating participation in that *pathway*, this too becomes a process through which a definition of professional identity for teacher educators may emerge. It is particularly important, therefore, that the views and ideas encapsulated by the framework are derived from and contributed to by practitioners – whether prospective, new or experienced teacher educators (Sections 1, 3, 4, footnote 5 and Appendix 8).

Participation in a *pathway* as proposed in this project links notions of transformative learning with professional learning as change through engagement, or *creative praxis* (Allen, 2012; Crouch, 2007; Prasad, 2015). It also recognises that this comes along with the associated benefits and costs. As an example, the travelogue format used as the basis for the auto-ethnographic element of this project as personal experience is drawn from a model of engagement proposed by Brady (1999). In order that his undergraduate students could gain the most effective experience from

‘vicarious’ regional travel as part of their programme of study, he devised a strategy of journal writing as a travelogue. This proved variously effective, but did show strong signs of having multiple layers of actual and potential substance in terms of developing geographical knowledge, study skills, collegiate working as well as enhancing imaginative creativity (*ibid.*). Brady devised a 12-point instruction as a framework to help learners structure their engagement with the module and its assignment (*ibid.*, p.81), through a process designed to combine various formats and approaches to encourage *creative praxis*, and development of authentic engagement, even when vicarious.

If encountered through various formats such as writing, imagery, imagination and dialogue, Dirkx’ analysis also suggests that the process of becoming who we are as our authentic professional selves can be enhanced, and is fundamental to processes for individuation and transformative learning (Dirkx, 2000). Taking these readings into consideration, the use of journal writing and images to literally and figuratively reveal the journeying of a participant is supported as a format and is used in this project for the autobiographical element, as a travelogue.

When creating a travelogue as being representative of individual participant journeys, participants should certainly be encouraged to make use of academic texts but also novels, film and imagery – to engage with the figurative as well as the narrative. The narrative force of a personalised or fictionalised account should not be underestimated. Books and films can give fantastical,

intentionally inspiring or uplifting accounts of what it means to become or be a teacher, for example *The Triumph* (Haines, 2006). However, there are as many, perhaps even more thought-provoking, examples to be found in film and literature such as *The Blackboard Jungle* (Hunter, 1954/1999), *To Sir with Love* (Braithwaite, 1959/2013), *The Secret History* (Tartt, 1993), *Teacher Man* (McCourt, 2006) - and even very dark accounts of cumulative frustration as in *One Eight Seven (187)* (Reynolds, 1997). Any accounts can and should spark dialogue and deeper questioning of assumptions within educational practices. The proposition here is that an individually devised *pathway* is enhanced by considering and reflexively engaging with alternative texts and sources. The manner in which journeys and journeying are represented as transformative processes of learning, both personally and in relation to the wider community, also benefits from wider reading. As has already been indicated above, Campbell's (1949) hero's journey and Murdock's heroine's journey (1990) have been used to help define and build a framework that can support processes of professional learning as described through the *pathways*. A *pathway* echoes the hero and heroine's process right from the 'departure' and 'call to adventure' to the 'return' and 'freedom to live [...where...] the hero is the champion of things becoming, not of things become, because he [sic] *is*' (Campbell, 1949, p.243). This represents a naturalised, synthesised and internalised transformative process (Avis, Fisher & Thompson, 2015; Jarvis, 2010; Scales, 2008). As with Ball (Section 2.c.), Dirkx has written extensively on issues surrounding professionally authentic practices in teaching and learning, the emotional and affective costs of teaching, and the role of informal learning for both adult

learners and their teachers (1996; 1997; 2000; 2006; Dirkx, Mezirow & Cranton, 2006). For Dirkx, authenticity and effectiveness as a teacher are entwined with the 'qualities of the teacher as a person' (Dirkx, 2006, p.29). One of the themes of his writing seems to be an invitation to remember that we, as teacher practitioners, are as much involved in a learning process, and our own 'mediated' qualities, as those we teach (*ibid.*). In the mid-1990s Dirkx was writing about the importance of engaging with a critique of practices, such as 'human resource development' as a way of supporting learning processes for adults in the workplace. Dirkx identifies that for teaching and learning practices to be effective and of good quality we need to be alert to the tendency for formal learning to marginalise informal or incidental learning, which is often of more intrinsic value to the individual (Dirkx, 1996). Without critical reflection circumstances may not be exposed, as shown when provision doesn't match learner need or expectation, and therefore it would not be surprising that 'even the most committed teachers can, after years of dedicated service, lose heart' (Dirkx, 2006, p.28), perhaps without even knowing why. Where teachers are able to identify that they are engaged in learning themselves, as a consistent aspect of their professional practice, this is more likely to support critical engagement with practice. When practitioners recognising their identity as being *teacher as learner* as well as *teacher*, then there is more opportunity critical engagement and for the incongruences of practice to be sought out, brought to light and acted upon (Sections 2.a, 2.e).

Dirkx also introduces us to the notion of individuation in this circumstance. He suggests that by engaging with the stages of a Jungian process towards individuation (Rowland, 2012), we develop as practitioners because of our engagement with processes of change, and are transformed by it as individuals and, therefore, gain the potential for becoming transformative teachers. This is echoed by Turner *et al* (2015) who make the link between personal growth in the transformational process of developing professional identity through writing, as is invited through the proposed *pathways*, and note the significance of this in building sustainable, robust and resilient practitioners (Section 2.c). Their research puts forward a good case for writing as ‘an appropriate medium through which to examine professional and, subsequently, identity development’ (*ibid.*, p.458) – a particular focus of this project, too. However, it is also worth highlighting the significance of Turner *et al*’s study as being ‘over a prolonged time period, capturing a developmental trajectory, resulting in a longitudinal data-set for analysis’ (2015, p.552); this is significant because it raises a critical point regarding the proposed *pathways*. The *pathways* are designed to be short or medium term programmes initially, which would mean engagement with them as professional learning will only be really effective if the processes and patterns discovered through engagement continue outside of and beyond the parameters of the framework. The longitudinal impact and developmental trajectory will depend on the efficacy of the framework in instilling a depth of learning and commitment to change of the participant.

In terms of the proposed framework for professional *pathways*, the principles initially derived from research with FE practitioners (Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013) didn't make note of a *characteristic or quality* relating to identification with a personal status as 'learner'. However, Dirkx, Cranton, Brookfield, Mezirow, Palmer and Turner *et al* suggest that this area is important enough that it should become one of the 'milestones' or *places of interest* to be visited as part of a *pathway*. For example, Brookfield includes the 'autobiographical' perspective in his model of lenses for evaluating practice, and for one's own professional learning, throughout his published works (1995; 2017; 2013); 'the journaling of the traveller' in this project (Section 5). Work by these authors also indicates that engagement with professional learning will only be really effective if it continues outside of and beyond the parameters of engagement with a structured process such as these *pathways*. We should be consistently, continually mindful of our professional selves through ongoing dialogic processes that might start from participation in a journey such as these *pathways*, but remain alert that impact needs to be longer lasting than just reminiscence over souvenirs – it needs to have been a transformative, a profound, experience.

e. Policies and sector documentation

Citing and interrogating policies and sector documentation is hugely problematic; following a consistent and accurate narrative can be difficult to maintain no matter how vigilant the researcher. Government and governing bodies change, online documents get archived and sector terminology is

revised, which is of particular significance when a project is examined over an extended period such as is the case for this project undertaken as part-time scholarly activity and study. Therefore, the key documents to be noted in this section have been particularly selected because of the part they play in supporting the ideas and critical analysis throughout this project; they do not claim to be a complete portrait of all the activity in the sector.

Given these concerns and limitations, the reason for considering policy and sector documentation is in order to be able demonstrate that the inconsistencies in language could be said to add to the problems of locating identity and discernible practices for teacher educators in FE (Sections 2.a, 2.d). Changes and inconsistencies in terminology have, at times, clouded understanding of the role, expectations and achievements of practice, and of the practitioners, in FE. Over recent years FE has had sector name changes, as noted in Section 1. When searching the UK government website it can be difficult in locating relevant policy and guidance materials. Until July 2016 the term used for this sector was Further Education and Skills (GOV.UK, 2016c), but since the switch between departments with oversight of FE practices - from Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) to Education (DfE) – the sector and its practices now appear to also be referred to as Further Education and Training (GOV.UK, 2016b). The Government's website, as of November 2016, has pages titled both 'Further Education and Training' <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/further-education-and-training>, and 'Further Education and Skills'

<https://www.gov.uk/topic/further-education-skills/administration>. The homepage for the DfE online (at time of writing) states that:

The Department for Education is responsible for education, children's services, higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills in England, and equalities. We work to achieve a highly educated society in which opportunity is equal for all, no matter what their background or family circumstances.
(GOV.UK, 2016a, p.online)

These may seem small details and comparatively minor changes but the impact can be much larger. What is implied by the changes between 'skills' to 'training'? What are the implications for funding and affiliations in the sector when moved from BIS to DfE? This project is not focused on answering these questions, but wants to raise the concern that without consistency and accuracy in locating and identifying policy materials the aim of developing professional identifies for any practitioners in the sector is going to be even more problematic. Former government ministers and professional bodies have heavily criticised changes to both provision and funding related strategies, sometimes questioning the necessity for them, at all (Robertson, 2016; Whittaker & Offord, 2015). For both teachers and teacher educators in the sector remaining abreast of changes, maintaining a professional profile and professional identity (Sections 2.a, 2.d) can be severely undermined by a lack of clarity of purpose, expectations and achievement in a complex area of practice. The breadth of provision in FE remains exciting and critical to the educational health of the UK, however, the sustainability of a poorly defined sector has become, increasingly, a concern (157 Group, 2012, p.175; Amalathas, 2010; UK Parliament, 2015).

For example, *the Foundation* list provision in the sector as covering:

- Further Education Colleges
- Independent Training Providers
- Community Learning and Skills Providers
- Employers funded to deliver training and Apprenticeships
- Prisons
- Independent specialist colleges
- Sixth form colleges

(Education and Training Foundation, 2016b, p.online)

And yet, recent influential reports, strategic plans and ministerial statements, such as the *Wolf Report 2011* and statements on post-16 literacy and numeracy (Hancock, 2016; Wolf, 2011), have focused on pre-19 vocational programmes and functional skills, and not the wealth of practices and provision found outside of schools and HE.

If the changes in the format and titles for professional bodies for sector practitioners are added to this fluidity of terminology and practice policy making, it begins to become clearer why the FE sector, including practitioners, find it difficult to articulate roles, expectations and achievements (Section 1).

This project is focused specifically on professional learning and the creation of a *pathway*, a framework for supporting professional formation or development, for teacher educators in FE. However, the lack of clarity around definitions of the sector and its purposes is similarly identifiable in the movement in policy regarding qualifications for teachers and trainers in FE. At the time of writing, policy on teacher qualification is based on regulations and guidance devised and agreed in 2013 by the Learning & Skills Improvement Service (LSIS, 2013).

This was a reversal of previous legislation requiring FE teachers and trainers to be fully qualified which had been withdrawn in 2012, resulting in a step-change in the movement towards teachers in any and all sectors being seen as professionally equal. As it was phrased in the *Lingfield Report 2012*, ordered by the very briefly-held position of *Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning*, the preference was for:

Revocation of the 2007 Regulations from 1 September 2012, with largely discretionary advice to employers on appropriate qualifications for staff and continuous professional development replacing compulsion.
(Lingfield, 2012, p.online)

By moving towards discretionary advice rather than legislation the professional expectations and recognition for FE practitioners were severely diminished.

Since that report and the ensuing changes to policy, there have been statements from bodies such as the IfL, also now superseded, questioning the veracity of this Government decision. But the question still remains: 'Should teaching qualifications be left to chance?' (Chowen, 2013). Open letters from Ministers can give a summary view of the political position on sector changes: in particular they give indication of 'priorities'. In February 2015 Vince Cable (then Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills) and Nick Boles (then Minister for Skills and Equalities) authored an open letter from to Peter Lauener (Chief Executive for the Skills Funding Agency) stating the priorities and funding decisions for the coming financial year 2015-16. The priorities listed in this letter echoed those cited above, and suggest a narrowing idea of what the FE sector is currently engaged with:

Key priorities:

High quality apprenticeships that meet the needs of the economy and offer a credible alternative to university.

Traineeships (pre-apprenticeship programmes) will continue of high quality work experience, English and maths and development of the basic attributes employers value.

Critical to support the availability of English and maths for all those learners who need to improve their literacy and numeracy levels to GCSE standard.

NB In next few years apprenticeship funding becomes channelled through employers; individuals' access to 24+ Advanced Learning Loans will continue to grow.

(Cable & Boles, 2015, p.online)

The slightly more detailed list of 'priorities for funding and key areas of focus' included in the letter does include reference to Prison Education, and hints at wider practices but in very loose terms. Suggestions made are framed very broadly:

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and their local FE providers across the country will continue to strengthen [...] securing a provider offer that is more responsive to the local economy.

[...]

Community Learning Community learning is an important part of the wider skills offer and can transform the lives of people experiencing serious social and economic disadvantage [...] which includes piloting... community learning courses to help adults recover from mild to moderate mental illness.

[...]

Innovative partnerships, collaborative planning and high quality teaching and learning are the foundation for local provision that inspires people to succeed and supports them to lead fulfilling lives.

(*ibid.*, online)

Happily the letter also mentions a comparatively small Community Learning budget for local practices derived from policy decisions from 2011 (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, 2011, p.online). The open letter links to the previous document and advises that there will be provision for learning opportunities: 'usually unaccredited [...] so that adults can access non-formal

learning, paying according to their means' (Cable & Boles, 2015, p.online). It is also made clear that these non-formal learning opportunities will, however, be based on national objectives (e.g. employability, Maths and English skills). Although these national objectives are stated as the basis for adult non-formal learning, NIACE note in their summary of 'New Chances, New Challenges', that the purpose of Government supporting community learning is also to:

- Maximise access to community learning for adults, bringing new opportunities and improving lives, whatever people's circumstances.
- Promote social renewal by bringing local communities together to experience the joy of learning and the pride that comes with achievement.
- Maximise the impact of community learning on the social and economic well-being of individuals, families and communities.

(NIACE, N.D., p.online)

From this we can discern an intention to support wider practices in FE, but that the main thrust is, nevertheless, towards national priorities and objectives which are economically oriented. There is recognition of FE providing wider learning opportunities and that these are linked to social and individual well-being, as distinct from economic well-being.

Two final contemporary publications to note are the *Common Inspection Framework: education, skills and early years 2015* (Department for Education/Ofsted, 2015) and the *Sainsbury Report 2016* (Lord Sainsbury, 2016). The *Common Inspection Framework* covers all ages of educational provision and states its purpose so:

The common inspection framework sets out how Ofsted inspects maintained schools and academies, non-association independent schools, further education and skills provision and registered early years settings in England.

(Department for Education/Ofsted, 2015, p.1)

The importance of this document is that it outlines the expectations of the inspectorate, and brings all educational provision, except for HE and some non-accredited programmes, under one framework for inspection – hence the name. The introduction and maintenance of this framework has not run smoothly. The word ‘children’ is used 45 times, but ‘young people’ only 3 times and adults not at all – young or otherwise. Instead, the uneasily identifiable group of not-children and referred to as ‘learners’, which is awkwardly worded given that the hope would be that everyone - children, young people, or young adults - could be referred to as a ‘learners’ (Department for Education/Ofsted, 2015). The word ‘teacher’ or ‘teachers’ is used three times – once referring to initial teacher education, but is otherwise absent from the document. This is of interest as, apart from section 30, *Quality of teaching, learning and assessment* where teachers are mentioned twice, the implication seems to be that teachers have little to do with the educational practices for this huge range of learners. The points that are related to teachers’ practices are described as being when Inspectors judge:

...the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment by evaluating the extent to which:

- teachers, practitioners and other staff have consistently high expectations of what each child or learner can achieve, including the most able and the most disadvantaged
- teachers, practitioners and other staff have a secure understanding of the age group they are working with and have relevant subject knowledge that is detailed and communicated well to children and learners

(Department for Education/Ofsted, 2015, p.13)

The breadth of the role in all its complexity appears to have been reduced to their ‘expectations’ of the learner, and ‘understanding’ of the age group and subject knowledge. This seems a very small part of the whole professional identity of the teacher and the complexity of their role. The same issues are equally complex and difficult to navigate when trying to create a framework for professional learning for FE teachers preparing for, or already engaged in, teacher education. According to the papers that precede this project (Exley, 2010; Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013), a suitably designed *pathway* anticipates that participants will be engaged in developing their knowledge of Education as a specialist subject, as well as considering their involvement in curriculum development. In a working environment filled with inconsistencies regarding priorities, definitions and terminology it seems inevitable that practitioners may be struggling to make sense of their identity, professionally and personally. In such an environment any *pathway* for professional learning would need to be ‘future-proof’ - able to deal with changes and ambiguities – whilst maintaining a robust, flexible and well-considered framework.

The *Common Inspection Framework* makes no further reference to teachers, nor does it make note of the many other aspects of the teachers’ role: communication skills with relevant others (parents, stakeholders, visitors...), management skills, pedagogical knowledge or a commitment to high quality provision. What is the role of the teacher educator if this is the extent of the measure through inspection of teachers in providing high quality educational practice? As a professional practice, the opportunity is here to offer a set of

guiding principles and framework of support to enhance both teacher educator role *and* identity.

The *Sainsbury Report 2016* was commission by BIS but is now under the auspices of DfE with the change of Government department around the time of its publication in 2016 (Lord Sainsbury, 2016). The final report, titled the *Post-16 Skills Plan*, was based on an earlier report into what was termed 'technical education', also chaired by Lord Sainsbury, which makes 34 recommendations. Even though the focus seems very specific - 'technical education' in post-16 practice - it has important implications for funding and provision across the both the FE sector and schools provision. The report strongly positive, indicating that the Government are 'delighted', accepts the proposals 'unequivocally' and looks forward to implementation of the recommendations as soon as can be afforded within the current framework (Lord Sainsbury, 2016, p.online).

In terms of the implications for provision and practices in FE I believe that the single most important factor is the clear statement that learners will have to choose between differentiated, yet parallel, academic or vocational options. This approach means that there are three things of note which will have a significant impact on practice, learners, teachers and therefore teacher educators. Firstly, the breadth of opportunity, to keep 'doors open' and allow young people time to grow and discern their own skills, strengths or weaknesses as well as their passions, may be channelled earlier in their learning lives than previously offered in FE, perhaps even starting in their

school years. Secondly, the clearly proposed new qualifications, will have an impact on teachers and trainers as they have to get to grips with new structures, expectations and roles including maintaining 'up-to-date understanding of the industry and in environments which accurately simulate the workplace' (Lord Sainsbury, 2016, p.26). Finally, provision will be impacted across all related sectors by the statement found in section 3.16: 'We propose that any qualifications which do not fall within the technical or academic options should not be eligible for funding support' (Lord Sainsbury, 2016, p.27).

These three issues alone show the value of a professional *pathway*, as proposed, which recognises the importance of:

- engaging with and developing individual knowledge of Education as a specialist subject
- broadening experience and diversity of teaching across levels, subjects or contexts
- examining the variety of posts held
- enhancing involvement in curriculum development
- working with and/or being affiliated to a range of organisations

All of the above, which are some of the features and suggested *places of interest* to be visited by practitioners engaging in a *pathway* (Sections 1, 2.a and Appendices 6, 7), appear to echo Lord Sainsbury's recommendations and expectations. They also support the idea that a model of professionalism for teacher educators would then also require a multi-aspect model including the 4 aspects of being a teacher educator cited in the four-fold model: 'as a curricular subject specialist (for example, in geography, engineering, beauty therapies, English language); as an effective teacher in the LLS; as a teacher whose

explicit subject specialist knowledge and understanding includes Education; and also as a researcher' (Exley, 2010, p.online).

f. Professional learning and continuing professional development

One of the questions posed in the participant interviews was: *How would you understand the term 'professional learning' and how might it relate to continuing professional development (CPD)?* (Section 3). The results of those responses, discussed later in this piece, are relevant here as they hint at the range of possible ways that professional learning is understood by people already engaged in education practices. Given the lack of clarity and breadth of ideas shown in the interviews, it became clear that time must be spent on looking at current understandings; without clarification, any further discussion about a framework could not continue in an informed and meaningful way. This section of the literature review is an examination of the terms professional learning and continuing professional development (CPD) particularly in relation to the professional formation or development of teachers in FE. The following section (2.g) will focus on these ideas in relation to teacher education practices and practitioners, their professional practices and identities. Although these are very closely related, the interviews suggest that separating these ideas into two themes would be useful for a more detailed examination of how practitioners understand the terms used in regard to professional practices for teachers in FE and HE, and for FE teacher educators in particular.

The sentiments of the participants seem to echo many of the general points made in the literature available on professional learning and CPD. Key words and terms associated with notions of professional learning, and with CPD, tend to be forward-looking and positive. Professional development activities are identified as 'developmental', enhancing practice, intent on improvement building professional confidence and competence, maintaining subject specialist knowledge and so on. There was little to suggest from interviews that there was disagreement with the purpose and intent of CPD and professional learning as a practitioner, but what was notable was a difference in confidence about whether these two terms could be defined separately (Section 5). As a generalisation, CDP was readily identified as part of interviewees' professional lives, and variously described as 'usually mandatory' (Pandita⁸), 'problematic' (Daisy), 'passive' (Val) and representable through a box-ticking approach (Cristina, Karen); what Timperley refers to as 'merely participatory' (2011, p.5). On the other hand, the notion of professional learning was less confidently identified, and either not clearly defined at all – described as 'less familiar' (Ruth), seen as 'the same thing' as CPD (Cristina), or 'coming first' prior to a process of CPD - and therefore possibly more closely aligned with professional formation (Daisy, Karen).

Two texts that have attempted to raise the profile of teacher educators in FE in terms of their professional learning in the context of this project are Philpott

⁸ Pandita, Daisy, Cristina, Val, Ruth, Karen are pseudonyms for participants in interviews for this project (Appendix 9).

(2014) and Timperley (2011). Philpott's book offers a small, yet thorough and well-resourced text on some of the theories relatable to professional learning. The text moves through the notions and some examples of models for professional learning categorised into seven chapters, critically examining their usefulness for teacher education. In conclusion, rather than arriving at a definition of professional learning, Philpott urges us to see this as a field, as a *theory* of professional learning, and one which we need to critically engage with from the stance of our own practices. The point is also made that professional learning is not solely the terrain of the initiate teacher, and that:

...it is important not to separate the learning of novices from the wider established culture and practices of experienced practitioners. Effective professional learning is fostered by effective established cultures of professional practice and enquiry.
(Philpott, 2014, p.75)

In these terms, having a *pathway* that encourages and supports professional learning to prospective and new teacher educators seems sensible. And where Philpott's book notes that we live in changing times, and that 'changing models of teacher education mean there are new ways of understanding professional learning as practices, roles and identities are re-established' (*ibid.*, 2014, back cover). I would go on to argue that this also speaks to the relevance of a *pathway* for teacher educators - working in the same, shifting contexts – whether prospective, new or experienced (footnote 5). In exploring models relevant to professional learning, Philpott also examines notions of 'craft' in teacher education, and refers to this as 'craft knowledge', which is an interesting adjunct to the ideas discussed in Section 2.b.

Philpott's selection of theories of professional learning provides a useful text that would be an effective guide for participants in a *pathway* in that it makes suggestions and offers a very helpful overview, whilst maintaining a critical engagement with the theoretical ideas on offer. Once a participant in a *pathway* has begun to construct their *itinerarium*⁹ (Sections 3, 4.b and Appendix 7), as a plan of their intended travel through the terrain of professional learning, having a text like Philpott's would provide ideas on how to engage with the visits to *places of interest* on their journey, and ways to articulate their journeying (Appendix 1).

Philpott notes the importance of teacher education being provided in an environment where 'experienced practitioners are still regularly engaged in a culture of learning and collaboration' (Philpott, 2014, p.33). This is echoed in Q.4 in the interviews (Section 3 and Appendix 2), which considers preferences for collaborative, independent or co-constructive approaches that participants might take when undertaking a *pathway*. The significance of novice or experienced teachers working collaboratively 'as co-workers and co-enquirers' (*ibid.*) is clearly stated by Philpott - and this is a recommendation shared by this project: that, as far as possible, prospective, new and experienced teacher educators should be able to work together, whilst respecting the individual journey taken by the participant on their professional *pathway*. This brings into question the possibility of the *pathway* being supportable as a distance or

⁹ An *itinerarium* is an ancient form of map detailed to help with preparations and planning for a journey - see Appendices 1 and 8.

remote learning experience because of the dispersed geography of some practices. It suggests that a *pathway* would benefit from being shared in any way possible, whether to overcome geographical distances or time-constraints. For example, a sense of shared experience could be created through metaphorical or actual exchange of postcards or epistles between participant and their supporting colleague, all contributing to the travelogue of the journeying participant (Section 2.d). This need for sharing is echoed by Eraut who notes that 'professional autonomy/isolation limits collegial support and makes practical help in the action context extremely unlikely' (1994, p.54). His suggestion is that more time should be spent between researchers and practitioners in order that their 'research will attend to practitioners' perspectives and concerns' (Eraut, 1994, p.55), a point that is made in Lunenberg & Willemse's model of the 'characteristics of research' for teacher educators as having a focus on 'the unique practices of teacher educators and the value of their personal experiences' (2006, p.96).

Citing City *et al* (2009), Philpott also refers to the 'professional autonomy/isolation', a feature identified by Eraut who noted 'that historically teaching is a solitary profession with a weak culture of collaboration and a weak shared professional knowledge base' (Eraut, 1994, p.54). The effects of this limiting isolation could be challenged more confidently if embraced directly as part of our professionalism as teachers and teacher educators, and a professional *pathway* as proposed here could help to achieve this end. An alternative view might be that, despite the introduction of the proposed

framework, the solitary, isolated and weak nature of the professional, as described by Philpott and Eraut, may nevertheless diminish its possible impact. As shown by the fact that Eraut was writing in 1994, and Philpott makes the same point in 2014, the power of situated practice to influence or limit change even in current practice should not be underestimated. The perceived weaknesses, isolation and solitary nature of practice for teacher educators is not only an on-going concern, but a geographically wider issue, too. The problems associated with having limited recognition as a professional group is not solely a UK FE experience, as testified by a recent large-scale research project in Belgium aimed at linking practitioners and practices internationally (Czerniawski, MacPhail & Guberman, 2015; Tack *et al.*, 2018). Tack *et al.* suggest that this tendency for isolating, individual responsibility remains a concern for school-based teacher educators, too, noting that:

Flemish institution-based teacher educators' professional development opportunities are currently limited and teacher educators' mainly remains a personal responsibility. The current supply is characterised by too general on-off workshops with little long-term impact, and with a limited focus on developing the role of a researcher. Given the lack of a clear policy on teacher educators' professional development, teacher educators' engagement remains mostly ad hoc and depends on chance and goodwill (both from the individual teacher educator and the teacher education institute).
(Tack *et al.*, 2018, p.98)

This is a sentiment echoed in a paper by Patton & Parker (2017), who note significant levels of feelings of isolation and a lack of clear opportunities for professional development, across an international participant group, summed up effectively by the phrase 'Quite simply these teacher educators felt alone and insular in their positions...' (*ibid.*, 354).

Philpott does not make use of the term 'continuing professional development', or Tack *et al*'s 'professional development' (2018, p.98), instead he refers to different forms of professional learning and professional practices, such as Shulman *et al*'s professional content knowledge, Lave and Wenger's communities of practice and Eraut's professional knowledge and competencies (Section 1 on Eraut and 'being professional'). Reading Philpott's book, the feeling is that process is important, and that procedure should be negotiable and reflexive – appropriate to the need rather than prescribed; ideas that he holds in common with Timperley.

Timperley starts her text with the bold statement that: 'Much professional development has little meaning for teachers' (Timperley, 2011, p.2). The distinction that I see between the belief that someone's professional practice can be 'developed', i.e. through CPD activities, and the idea that practitioners should be engaged in their own professional learning is one of ownership. Timperley expresses the perceptions of difference between CPD and professional learning neatly and comprehensively when she states:

...the term 'professional development' has taken on connotations of delivery of some kind of information to teachers in order for them to influence their practice whereas 'professional learning' implies an internal process in which individuals create professional knowledge through interaction with this information in a way that challenges previous assumptions and creates new meanings.
(Timperley, 2011, p.4-5)

Timperley goes on to note the importance of any professional learning being 'in depth' and potentially 'transformational'; engagement in professional development events will be ineffectual if 'brief and superficial', which Timperley

suggests is too often the case (Timperley, 2011, p.5). Encouraging and enabling deeper and more meaningful engagement with professional learning may also help address and challenge problems identified within the teaching profession itself, such as those cited above relating to weak cultures of collaboration and knowledge-sharing (Philpott, 2014).

If the profession has weaknesses in these areas, as Philpott (2014) suggests, then CPD may have a role to play in this; but for change, to be really effective a co-constructive approach is needed. Timperley's research led to an understanding that the most effective leaders of professional learning are those who 'develop learning goals and plans with and for their teachers, as they expected their teachers to do with and for their students' (Timperley, 2011, p.21).

Definitions of CPD can also be found in *the Foundation's* membership website:

As a member of the Society for Education and Training (SET), you commit to undertaking continuing professional development (CPD) that has an impact on your practice, each year. This demonstrates that you are improving your relevant knowledge and skills in your subject area and teaching or training.

(Society for Education and Training, 2016b, p.online)

Information provided by the website seems to offer a description that is broader than that generally expressed by interviewees, although it should be noted that their responses may have become oversimplified given that they were offered two terms and asked to distinguish between them (Q.3, Appendix 2). The SET website (*ibid.*) suggests that the requirement is not to attend specific sessions, training days or to 'tick boxes', but rather to offer evidence of activities such as:

- Reading relevant journal articles or reviewing books
- Taking training courses or formal development or study
- Peer review, mentoring or shadowing
- Online learning including engagement in discussion forums and blogs
- Viewing and reviewing television programmes, documentaries and the internet.

These activities are described by SET as ‘professional development activities’ that should be evidenced in some way, reflected on in terms of the difference made and the impact it has had on learners, colleagues or organisations (2016b, p.online). This indicates that CPD and ‘professional learning’ may well be understood as being more similar to each other than different. From the perspective of SET, who purposefully reject having a ‘points system or minimum number of hours of CPD that members must achieve’ (*ibid.*, online), the activities could usefully contribute to a process of professional learning selected and shaped by the participant. Practitioners could, therefore, become co-constructors of their own professional learning, and *pathways* would provide a framework within which to undertake that journey, ideally becoming a longer-term element of practitioners’ professional practice. From my reading of these texts, I believe that a *pathway* could provide a process for professional learning, within which particular CPD activities would have a role to play for all teacher educators.

Despite the positive tone of both the texts noted above, and the hopes for this research project, there remains a concern regarding research into the developmental needs of teacher educators in FE. Ten years ago work by Harkin, Cuff & Rees (2008) looking at research into teacher education in FE reinforced the concern that this remained an under-researched field. It is fo

interest that this remained an interim report, never being fully published (Elliott, 2013); and it is hard to disagree with Elliot, even in 2018, when he writes that 'Thurston's (2010) suggestion that this group of teacher educators is to some degree invisible in the teaching and learning community appears well founded' (*ibid.*, p.327).

The final points of note in this section come from Timperley's work again: it is the significance of teachers being able to make the link between *any* form of professional development or professional learning - and their learners.

Timperley found that the more noticeable changes were in practice, especially where impact and 'difference' was perceived, the more willingly and confidently teachers engaged in the processes. This is seen in the framework proposed for the *pathway* as one of the *characteristics or qualities* of the participant in a journey as a 'love' of teaching and respect for learners (Section 2.a). Similarly, Timperley found a similar correlation wherever collegiate working had been improved through using a process of 'appreciative enquiry', cited by Timperley as her specific mode of enquiry for the research into professional learning (Timperley, 2011, p.118) (Section 1). 'Appreciative enquiry' is cooperative, encourages professional knowledge-sharing, strengthens cultures of collaboration and, hopefully, results in co-constructive professional learning experiences for teachers and teacher educators (Section 1).

g. Professional identity and teacher educators in FE teacher education

As noted previously, this section is a further examination of some of the issues discussed in Section 2.f but focusing on FE teacher educators and their professional practices and identities. As this project is specifically offering a framework for teacher educators in FE practice, it is useful to have an overview of how this is represented.

Teacher educators are described in this project as:

‘not only the ‘teachers of teachers who are engaged in the induction and professional learning of future teachers through preservice courses and [...] in-service courses’ (Swennen and van der Klink, 2009:29), but also those involved in mentoring, instructing and supporting the professional development of practicing teachers outside of a formal course or programme of study.’
(Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013, p.12)

The importance of trying to define the term *teacher educator* was highlighted when sending out requests for practitioners, and those not yet employed in the role, to become participants in this project. As discussed in Section 1., there is no single term used for people involved in FE teacher education, but in order to be manageable a term had to be settled on to avoid any unnecessary inconsistencies. What was particularly interesting was that by using the methods to contact people as participants described in Section 3, it was still very difficult to include the voice of those in the definition offered above, or those defined in this project as prospective teacher educators (Section 4 and Appendix 8). Contacting existent practitioners who could relate to the idea of being described as teacher educators through professional organisations or research networks was comparatively straightforward, but contacting ‘those

involved in mentoring, instructing and supporting the professional development of practicing teachers outside of a formal course or programme of study' proved more problematic (Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013, p.12). This is shown by the fact that all participants, bar one, were from in-service and pre-service teacher educator roles, and that one participant, Karen, who was contacted through personal communication, anticipated as being a *prospective* teacher educator, was actually an *experienced* teacher educator— in their own view and using the definition above (footnote 5 and Appendix 8). This confirms the broader definition offered to that of Swennen and van der Klink (2009), and indicates that there is, potentially, a significant body of practitioners who may not have come forward to participate because of the terminology. This is a problem for future research, and does suggest that any work done to help articulate ideas, and share knowledge and understanding within the FE sector and its practices, will benefit from dialogue that develops emergent terms that practitioners can identify with.

The number of journal articles available on teacher education practices in FE or HE has been slowly growing in number, as have texts on teacher education for the compulsory sector. There are texts to support trainee teachers preparing for the FE sector, and articles on how teacher educators can develop their professional practice in doing this. There are very few texts or articles on becoming a teacher educator in *any* sector - on teacher educator practices and their identities, rather than on teacher education practices through initial teacher training; texts for FE teacher educators are even less common. In this regard,

projects such this one are particularly significant as they help to meet one of Lunenberg & Willemse' five characteristics of research designed to 'support the professional development of teacher educators', namely that it is aiming to identify and maintain: 'A focus on the unique practices of teacher educators and on the value of their personal experiences' (Lunenberg & Willemse, 2006, p.96).

Names closely associated with work in the area of developing teacher education practices in FE have been Lucas, Nasta & Rogers (2004; 2011), Lawy & Tedder (2009), Appleby & Banks (2009), Boyd, Harris & Murray (2011) and Crawley (2016); these are either authors of papers and articles, or of comparatively slim volumes. Teacher education in FE has not been an area of extensive research or writing (Section 1). More has been written and published on the development of teachers in FE as professionals and on teacher educators in the compulsory sector, but very little on teacher educators in FE practices. In 2006, Noel wrote that 'As a career choice teacher education [in the learning and skills sector] is not too visible' (p.162): this appears to have remained the case for over ten years - although there is evidence of greater involvement and interest through recent publications (Crawley, 2016), Eliahoo (2016) and Springbett (2018). This project hopes to add to the available literature and research in this field.

[h. Research available on teacher education in FE in the UK, and research appropriate to the methodology and methods for this project \(Section 3.\)](#)

Without the work of Swennen and van der Klink, and of Lunenberg & Willemse, there would be very limited material available on research in teacher education.

Although these authors are essentially writing with regard to compulsory education and from the perspective of the Netherlands, their definitions of terms and models for practice can be aligned to practices in FE in the UK. The relevance of their work to UK practice is seen in the terms and ideas captured in their definition of the professional role for teacher educators (See Section 1), and in Lunenberg & Willemse' guidance on research involving the professional development of teacher educators (Section 3.). Their work readily relates to aspects of this project and the framework of characteristics suggested by Lunenberg & Willemse (2006) is used as an evaluative guide throughout (Sections 2.a, 2.f, 2.g, 4.a).

More recently, UK-based research has been undertaken by both Crawley (2015) and Eliahoo (2016) echoing many of the concerns and aspirations of this project. Both Crawley and Eliahoo are practitioner-researchers who are 'experienced teacher educators' in the terms of this project. The work of both Crawley and Eliahoo calls for greater recognition of the professional identity of teacher educators in FE practices, suggesting that any development of professional learning should be collaborative and flexible in its approach. This is in keeping with the previous papers by Exley (2010) and Exley & Ovenden-Hope (2013), and with this current project which seeks to provide a framework to support teacher educators in achieving these goals.

Crawley's work (2015; 2016) makes two particularly interesting points, both on the nature and characteristics of professionalism for teacher educator. The first is around the model used for a description for the *role* of the teacher educator in

FE, and the second is the use of *characteristics* to try to help discern and determine what is significantly identifiable as the role of the professional teacher educator in FE. Although these are seen as elements of *pathways* for teacher educators in FE, there are also significant differences such as Crawley's use of Robson's model of the 'dual professional' (2015, p.482), rather than the four-fold model suggested in this project (Appendix 8). He also cites ten characteristics of an FE practitioner, which is an expansion of the six initially offered by Exley & Ovenden-Hope (2013). Crawley's paper doesn't go into detail about the research methodology or methods used by which the ten characteristics have been devised, other than to say that they are an expansion and development of characteristics found in the models reviewed in the paper. This suggests that the paper is based on an interpretative approach using historical data interrogated through the lens of the author's experience and understanding of the sector and its practices¹⁰. The characteristics offered by Exley & Ovenden-Hope were formed as a result of a mixed methods approach – although still on a comparatively small scale:

Investigation methods consisted of a staff development day workshop for teacher educators in the LLS, focus group of four experienced teacher educators, an additional four e-mail questionnaire responses from a mailing of 62 and a literature search.
(Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013, p.9)

The main conclusion that can be drawn from this is that further research, more detailed and broader in scale, is still needed and that e-mail questionnaires may not be effective when seeking to engage busy practitioners. Research by

¹⁰ 'Dr Jim Crawley has worked as a PCE teacher educator in colleges and now in Higher Education for over 30 years' (Crawley, 2015, p.494).

Eliahoo underpins this need for further research into the roles and identities of teacher educators in FE settings, and her recent paper (2016) echoes many of the issues raised by Crawley, and found in early papers related to this project (Exley, 2010; Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013). Her paper is based on a larger research project, with a high return from an online survey, which incorporated four phases:

‘...in an iterative process:

Ten case studies drawn from in-depth semi-structured interviews.

Online survey (70 respondents).

Local focus group (15 participants).

Regional focus group discussion of minimum professional standards (40 participants).’

(Eliahoo, 2016, p.5)

All of the case study participants in Eliahoo’s project were what this *pathway* project would refer to as ‘experienced’ teacher educators as all had more than 10 years’ experience in teacher education, not new or prospective teacher educators (Section 1.). However, the online survey did address a wider range of participant views, using a similar but different definition in terms of sector service: ‘One to five years was designated as ‘early-career’; six to 10 years designated as ‘mid-career’; and 11 years and over designated as ‘long-career’ (Eliahoo, 2016, p.6). As with this *pathways* project proposed, the largest number identified themselves as long-career/experienced teacher educators. Both projects suggest that accessing and researching early-career/new teacher educators, or even prospective teacher educators, is proving more difficult and if the professional identity of this group is to be developed further research is needed to gain a clear and informed understanding of their views and understandings of their professional selves.

Interestingly, Eliahoo's research identifies that career needs can be categorised, primarily, as being in two phases. Firstly of being 'novice', and secondly when 'moving to a new post', and suggests a third stage which would apply to both phases which emphasises collaborative practice alongside 'scholarship and research' (2016, p.7). This chimes with Crawley's proposal for the 'growing connections' approach which utilises 'ongoing sharing and building' between practitioners (2015, p.492).

Eliahoo recommends (2016, p.1):

that new professional standards for teacher educators could be written collaboratively by practitioners, within a policy and institutional framework which supports the scholarship and research requirements of teacher educators.

In contrast, or perhaps in complement, this *pathways* project aims to provide a framework based on wide principles as characteristics, qualities, and *places of interest* (Sections 2.d, 2.f and Appendix 7). And the principle of supporting scholarship and research is recognised in the *pathways* framework, around which practitioners could plan a professional journey tailored to their individual circumstances, practices and intentions.

This is a positive and purposeful proposition, but one that needs cautious attention and a balance between support and constraint; as Eliahoo notes herself: 'Would professional standards for English FE teacher educators represent a double-edged sword, in a sector noted for its culture of performativity?' (2016, p.13) (Section 1). Because of the breadth of practice

contexts in the FE sector, identified by Eliahoo and others cited in this project, discernment of a single set of standards, flexible and responsive enough to meet that diversity of provision, could be extremely difficult if not impossible given the rapidly changing nature of the sector (Exley, 2010).

Taking a more general view of research in this area of FE practice, there are two particular texts on researching in FE, written for practitioners, and focused on useful approaches that can be used to help support the notion of the teacher-as-researcher in the sector. Tummons and Duckworth (2013) wrote an instructional, well-organised text that helped establish this aspect of the teaching role for FE practitioners. This was followed the same year by Wallace (2013), who has created a small and useful book that also supports and encourages practicable approaches to practitioner-based research for the FE sector. These slim volumes are critical as an indication of the growing concern and interest in research for FE practitioners. This has been hinted at in professional standards since FENTO (Section 1), and is currently visible in *the Foundation's* standards which declare the expectation that teachers and trainers 'draw on relevant research as part of evidence-based practice' (Education and Training Foundation, 2016a, p.online). In detail, this intention is expressed in terms of teachers' and trainers' 'professional knowledge and understanding' and professional standard 8, which affirms that they are required to 'maintain and update [their] knowledge of educational research to develop evidence-based practice' (*ibid.*).

In terms of the processes involved in this research project, the methods for data gathering, approaches for reflexive critical analysis and design of the proposed framework have each derived from a broad range of sources. Although varied in their origins, these elements all reflect a qualitative approach (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013; Crotty, 1998; Punch, 2009; Tummons & Duckworth, 2013), and as such this project defers to Crotty's (1998) questions to help reveal the appearance of a route through the research process. Crotty suggests that four key questions can reveal the 'basic elements' of qualitative research being undertaken, bringing an ordered and systematic aspect that can be missing in this form of investigation (1998, p.2). By taking time to consider the research methods used for a qualitative project in terms of the researcher's epistemological, theoretical and methodological perspective, they can be justified in their use and critiqued as to their efficacy (Section 4).

For this research project the methods for data collection were discerned early in the process, based on previous research as discussed above: interviewing, and personal and professional experience as auto-ethnographic engagement. The possibility of focus groups was also muted but proved to be problematic in terms of the logistics and of relevance to the project (Section 4). Building on previous papers demands that this project reviews their effectiveness and suitability for further use in almost every aspect, as an affirmation of the choices made but also as a revelation of their suitability and efficacy. Although the methodology and methods are discussed in more detail in Sections 3 and 4, the

following is a review of the key literature referred to in this process starting with the methods, according to Crotty's suggested approach.

Although Crotty discerns a procedural approach through questioning, I agree that this is not as linear as it may first appear, and many of the stages of the process overlap and each can justify or reveal the significance of the other. Gray asks whether we can 'conduct research without having first established our epistemological position' (2014, p.38), although he doesn't offer a definitive answer. I concur with his questioning of this as often an assumption, and would go on to suggest that it is equally likely that both a better understanding *and* a revelation of the researcher's epistemological position will result from *engagement with* research, whether starting with that as 'known' or accepting it to be emergent.

The following section of this review starts with methods because it is where the project process began and as such reflects the actual order in which its epistemology emerged. At the same time, each aspect of Crotty's model can be seen to overlap as understanding develops and new knowledge appears. The methods used in the data gathering were two-fold: interviewing, auto-ethnographic participation. These have been selected to test findings from different perspectives; they are used to revisit and return to the data, echoing ideas of 'folding, unfolding, re-folding' (Deleuze & Conley, 2006, p.158; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) (Section 3). Gray invites and encourages real-world research by practitioners from any sector to get involved in research as part of their

professional identity and development, which is a sentiment supported by this project (Gray, 2014), hence the use of interviews and recognition of my personal and professional engagement.

Interviewing as a data collection method stemmed from previous research and the anticipation of a more effective approach than using e-mail questionnaires or online surveying. The choice to use semi-structured questions at individual interviews with practitioners was also based on the aim of revisiting, testing and revising the results of related questions (Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013). Guidance on how to write and make use of semi-structured questions came from Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2000), Tummons & Duckworth (2013), Silverman (2013) amongst others. But, maybe more significantly, the thorny issue of how to locate the interviewees in the first place was addressed through using a direct appeal through one of the few sector-specific professional networks available (TELL, see Section 1) and chain-referral sampling for those more difficult to access (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981; Shaghaghi, Bhopal & Sheikh, 2011). This was as a result of reviewing the previous research where a 'wide net' approach had not been proportionately effective and so a more directed, purposeful approach was utilised (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000; Shaghaghi, Bhopal & Sheikh, 2011) (Sections 3, 4). As a starting point, Cohen, Manion & Morrison's text, now in its 7th edition, has become a main-stay for early-career researchers in Education, along with the 4th edition of Denzin and Lincoln's writings for qualitative researchers (2011).

Given the women-oriented demographic within teacher education that Noel identified (2006), and which Springett (2018) suggests remains the case over 10 years later, it could be argued that an alternative purposive sampling technique would be appropriate for this project; one that sought the voice of male practitioners, for example. Although, as noted by Ritchie *et al*, 'all sampling is purposive to a degree' (2014, p.113), this is an area that future research must tackle if it is to properly reflect the breadth and range of teacher educators as an identifiable professional practitioner group. The same chain-referral sampling technique could be used, but with a declared intention to seek a particular demographic which might be harder to access (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981; Shaghaghi, Bhopal & Sheikh, 2011).

Since these 2011 publications, it seems there has been a move towards practice-focused publications and papers such as the ones noted above, to augment the larger, comprehensive volumes.

The second method of data collection has been through use of personal experience and engagement with the initial stages of a *pathway*, using a variation on the *patchwork text* (Winter, Parker & Ovens, 2003). Originally devised as a way to respect and recognise the ways learners express their learning as product and process, a *patchwork text* offers a structure for comprehensive and reflexive research of practice. Intended as a method for assessment, curriculum evaluation and development, the creation of the *patchwork text* includes the collation and engagement with patches to create

the whole, using images, evidence of experiences, reflections, and other forms of physical, visual and written material; the role of the written word in joining these patches together to create a cohesive whole is vital. In my view the *patchwork text* provides a vehicle that can bring together two research approaches particularly significant to the principles of the *pathway*:

Richardson's notion and practice of writing 'as a method of enquiry' (in Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p.499~) and the use of alternative methods of data collection such as visual imagery and physical objects (Gray, 2004; Jipson & Paley, 2007; Liebenberg, 2009; Liebenberg, Didkowsky & Ungar, 2012; Rourke & Rees, 2013; Schwartz, 1989; Tinkler, 2013). For a *pathway* to be more than simply a collection of unrelated patches, a *patchwork text* approach can help link a wide range of data items gathered by the participant, bringing them into a whole, stitching them together through writing. As an approach, a *patchwork text* invites constructivist¹¹ investigation and enquiry through collaboration and practitioner engagement using a diversity of formats. The structure remains flexible and appropriate to practice-based research, hence its selection for use in the auto-ethnographic element of the project as an example of how a *pathway* might begin to take shape.

As noted above, auto-ethnography is used as a methodological approach to this research project. Auto-ethnography has its roots in ethnographic research, but seeks to recognise the role of the researcher through a process cognisant of

¹¹ It should be noted that in his oft quoted table relating epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology and methods, Crotty (1998) uses the term 'constructionism' as an epistemology, but this is converted to 'constructivism' by others using this table as a source (Gray, 2014). See Section 1.

our social subjectivity (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018; Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2010). The difficulties of trying to specify an exact definition for auto-ethnography are expressed in Hamilton, Smith & Worthington's article which looks at three qualitative approaches, noting that the 'methodological boundaries are blurred' between them (Hamilton, Smith & Worthington, 2008, p.23). The authors do, however, offer a model that seeks to identify core elements, which also marry with this research project and its aims. The shared themes are 'elements of good research', 'common places', 'use of narrative/story' and of "'I'" (*ibid.*). The particularity of auto-ethnography is seen to be that there is a 'cultural context' to the research design, in contrast to a focus on 'story' or 'practice /improvement'. In these terms, the current research project questioning the viability of a '*pathway*' as a framework for teacher educator professional learning, is most closely aligned with an auto-ethnographic approach, although if the project moves to being actioned as '*pathways*' by practitioners, on it may be useful to consider a 'self study' approach looking to enhance practices through use of the framework. In contract, Spenceley (2011, p.416) suggests a definition for an autoethnographic approach that includes a more directly dynamic element of action and functionality:

Rather than simply reflecting on the world as it is in an objective, narrative and disengaged manner, autoethnography, with its use of the emotional experience and responses of the individual as connectors between different ways of 'knowing', enables participants to actively make sense of the world and function within their environment.

It has been written that there are usually three axes along which the auto-ethnographer variously places their emphasis: the research process, related culture or cultures, and the self (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018; Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2010; Ellis & Bochner, 2000). This can lead to the notion that auto-ethnographic research is necessarily autobiographical, but in the case of this research project, the aim is to simultaneously augment the voice of practitioners whilst recognising the lens through which the researcher views the whole. In support of this view, Denshire makes some significant points around the role and significance of the voices of others in auto-ethnographical research (2014). noting that: 'While auto-ethnography contains elements of auto-biography, auto-ethnography goes beyond the writing of selves.' (*ibid.*, p. 833). Through this research project what I, too, 'am proposing is the production of collaborative accounts by previously silenced voices' (*ibid.*, p. 844), which offers the exciting possibility in the future of *pathways* resulting in communities of '*creative praxis*' (Allen, 2012; Crouch, 2007; Prasad, 2015). Although Denshire speaks of 'silenced' others, authors and voices (*ibid.*), which may appear extreme language for the practitioner group of participants in this research project, the paucity of research material available already discussed suggests otherwise.

Underpinning this approach is a methodological position identified with the notion of '*creative praxis*' (Allen, 2012; Crouch, 2007; Prasad, 2015) (Sections 1, 2.d). Although not much material is available on this as a specific methodology, as a term it beautifully encompasses the intentions and principles of this project. When looking for ways in which to articulate the methodological

position of this project, given the practices involved - the themes, the intentions and topic - the expectation of creative thinking and Freirean 'praxis' kept emerging and reemerging. *Creative praxis* becomes a valid position by bringing together innovative questioning and curiosity about the enquiry, with the purposefulness and power of Freire's praxis:

Functionally, oppression is domesticating. To no longer be prey to its force, one must emerge from it and turn upon it. This can only be done by means of the praxis: reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it.
(Freire, 1996, p.33)

Material that brings these ideas together in terms of research practices is discussed in the work of Allen, an artist, educationalist and academic developer (Allen, 2008; University South Wales, 2017). In a chapter on creativity and under-graduate studies, Allen and Coleman (2011) make the point that both students and academics believe that creativity is a requirement if seemingly disparate and complex experiences of learning and researching are to be effectively articulated and shared. Allen's work is closely involved in the development of effective frameworks when working with e-portfolios:

There are several aspects of eportfolio use that learners may find confronting or disorienting, including the development of efficacy with the relevant technologies, the incorporation of self- and peer-assessment into the learning process, and a more-or-less public enactment of the reflective cycle. For the transformative potential of eportfolio assessment to be realised this process must be scaffolded and supported – the simple provision of the technology is not sufficient.
(Allen & Coleman, 2011, p.65)

As with the *patchwork text*, Allen makes clear the importance of the use of writing as a method of researching. This is echoed in Richardson's ideas (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003), as she makes a case for a 'scaffolded' or framed

approach to help in the process, such as is offered by a *patchwork text*, well-designed e-portfolio or professional *pathway*. The use of a 'wikispace', a wiki-style website¹² (TES Global, 2015), in the auto-ethnographic element of this project relates to these ideas on creativity and *creative praxis* (Sections 3, 4). Allen offers a definition of *creative praxis* as a methodology in the following terms, also underlining the transformative nature of this as an approach and theoretical framework:

The methodology is framed as creative praxis, and incorporates learning, teaching and research dimensions:

- Transformative learning to support the development of creative capacities in students.
- Critical and creative pedagogy for the development of teaching as a creative practice
- Critical and creative research to drive transformation of practice.

(Allen, 2012, p.2)

Crouch also supports *creative praxis* and creativity as a methodological perspective, notably because of its transferability across disciplines (Crouch, 2009; Crouch, 2012). His paper on developing creative, reflexive practitioners points out that methods and methodologies can breach traditional barriers between disciplines of professional and the visual arts (Crouch, 2007). The other point that Crouch makes, relating to the possibilities opened up using *creative praxis* as a methodological approach, is that:

If adopting a performative attitude creates the potential for the individual to assess the creative act from outside of the act, then adopting a reflexive viewpoint allows an understanding of the creative process from a subjective viewpoint, revealing the dynamic relationship between the context, construction and the articulation of the act.
(Crouch, 2007, p.108)

¹² Wheeler uses the term 'wiki', and this will be used throughout for wiki-style websites as 'collaborative online spaces where multiple users can create, edit and share content' - see Appendix 8.

This importance of being able to access a 'subjective viewpoint', is in keeping with the intention of this project that participants, including the researcher, become fully engaged in the researching process as integral to a process of becoming and developing as a practitioner. This links to the four-fold model underpinning this project (Exley, 2010), and the element that being a researcher is an expectation of a professional teacher educator.

The theoretical framework for the project is one of transformative learning (Cranton, 1994, 2002; Mezirow, 1997), reflecting notions of *creative praxis*. Using Crotty's model for articulating the foundational elements for social research, 'four elements that inform one another' (Crotty, 1998, p.4), the methods and methodology relate comfortably to each other. They result in an interpretative positionality of engagement with the process, analysing data through the lens of *creative praxis*, with the potential - even necessity - for transformation (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013; Crotty, 1998; Punch, 2009; Tummons & Duckworth, 2013). If claiming an interpretative analysis from a creative, reflective and action-based perspective it follows that this is likely to be aligned to a constructivist epistemology; an epistemology which, according to Crotty, rejects cultural truths waiting to be found and instead claims that knowledge and understanding are derived from 'our engagement with the realities in our world' (1998, p.8). Definitions of constructivism being closely aligned with constructionism by some authors (footnote 11) means that the literature on this aspect of the project needs careful consideration. Crotty (1998) offers significant discussion on constructionism as differentiated from

constructivism, which can be summarised as follows: constructionism recognises that all knowledge is a construct, which can be upheld as a shared 'truth' or, as is more often in social research, as knowledge open to questioning and the possibilities of re-construction but having a shared and commutable understanding; constructivism, on the other hand, suggests that the individual interpretation and understanding of the world's 'realities' must be respected and given value, aside from socially shared, cultural constructions. This project identifies a constructivist approach over, but not denying, a constructionist one due to the emphasis given to practitioner interviews and the auto-ethnographic element of the research undertaken.

The epistemological position of this research project as constructivist seems not just suitable, but necessary - despite Gray's (2014) questioning (footnote 11). A research project that invites participants to share their opinions based on experience, whether early in their careers or as experienced practitioners, has the potential to find knowledge being questioned, challenged, formed and re-formed. Wenger felt it necessary to be clear about the epistemological position of his work on communities of practice and made a note in his introduction that outlined his position, which seems to suggest a constructionist view:

Common sense is only common-sensical because it is sense held in common. Communities of practice are the prime context in which we can work out common sense through mutual engagement. Therefore, the common concept of practice highlights the social and negotiated character of both the explicit and the tacit in our lives.
(Wenger, 1998, p.47)

In his footnote associated with this section of text Wenger lists a variety of positions held in learning theory, with the intention of providing simply a 'sketch

of the landscape in which [his] book is situated', adding that that the social theory perspective he has taken for this model could not claim to say 'everything there is to say about learning' (Wenger, 1998, p.279). The list offered includes an explanation of constructivist theory, but not of constructionism. It could be argued that Wenger has conflated the terms:

Constructivist theories focus on the processes by which learners build their own mental structures when interacting with an environment. Their pedagogical focus is task-oriented. They favour hand-on, self-directed activities oriented towards design and discovery. They are useful for structuring learning environments, such as simulated worlds, so as to afford the construction of certain conceptual structures through engagement in self-directed tasks (Piaget 1954; Papert 1980). (Wenger, 1998, p.279-280)

Interestingly, texts designed for, and commonly used by, education practitioner-researchers don't enter into deep discussion to discern the differences in terminology, all of which might suggest that there is room to enhance the academic rigour and robust nature of practitioner research (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Punch, 2009; Tummons & Duckworth, 2013; Wallace, 2013). If anything, authors like Crotty and Punch seem to rely on citation of a single article written by Guba and Lincoln (in Denzin & Lincoln, 1994) which doesn't fully expand of the definitions of these terms – nor does it appear in later editions of their *Handbook of Qualitative Research*.

Finally, for this Section, in the face of Crotty's argument that discerning ontological from epistemological positioning is difficult and that they 'tend to merge together' (Crotty, 1998, p.10), this project sees itself as clearly drawing on a reflexive ontology (Door, 2014). Rather, Punch (2009), like Crotty, groups ontology, epistemology and methodology as 'paradigms', and instead focuses

on methodologies and methods which seems to be the preference for texts designed or a practitioner audience. However, for education research to be able to justify and defend its position, or at least maintaining dialogue regarding the epistemological and ontological positioning, consideration of both would seem vital. If an articulation of the epistemological position helps expand on 'the relationship between researcher and reality' then the ontological position of knowing what that 'reality is like' (Punch, 2009, p.33) is equally important. Although Door (2014) only briefly discusses the relationship between reflexivity and ontology in her first chapter, as a phrase *reflexive ontology* encompasses the constructivist epistemology of this professional *pathways* project and provides its context, including 'the close relationship between researcher and focus, both set in a particular context' (2014, p.59). Through individual *reflexive* engagement with experiences, within an epistemological position contributing to the creation and enhancement of knowledge, our *ontological* understanding of the world emerges, revealing itself as it influences our actions, our *being in it* through a better understanding of its 'realities' (Crotty, 1998, p.8). This position is entirely in keeping with this project, valorising the significance of individual journeying, of the place of the researcher as auto-ethnographer, the relevance of collaboration and co-constructive working and the recognition of shared values revealed through and in practice.

3. Justification for the methodology and methods: selecting the route and planning transport – pages 96-119

Should anyone wish to retrace the steps that this research project has taken, they would not only need to have an understanding of the territory through reviewing the maps, charts and records already available (Section 2), but they would also need to know about how and why the route was selected, and about the planning and preparation put in place to try to ensure that the journey could be completed. This chapter is a justification for the methods and methodology used for questioning whether the model of professionalism and the proposed characteristics and qualities of teacher educators in FE practices are robust enough to form the basis of a framework to support professional learning (Exley, 2010; Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013).

This research project shares a theoretical framework and methodology with the *pathways* themselves, and in this way allows for the process to be critically reflexive (Clough & Nutbrown, 2012). Both processes are qualitative, interpretative, transformative and employ *creative praxis* as a methodological approach (footnote 4, Section 1; Section 2.h): they are intentionally reflexive requiring innovative thinking and seeking expression through impact on the world (Allen, 2012; Crouch, 2007; Prasad, 2015) (Section 2.f). They may also share methods and practices that participants in a *pathway* might elect to use themselves, such as elements of auto-ethnographic engagement, interviewing as professional dialogue and the use of available literature and resources. In order to justify the methodology and methods used, this section considers the type of journey: which route will be taken, what transport will be needed for a

safe and successful journey into potentially dangerous territories. It also offers a critically reflexive review of how the methodology and methods selected met the needs of the project.

The approach has been to design a research project that brings together the voices of practitioners as they are introduced to the idea of professional *pathways*, alongside my own experience of engaging with the framework. In this way, through a methodological approach of *creative praxis*, the framework and its principles have been considered, reviewed and revised. As outlined in the Introduction (Section 1), this is a qualitative research project, seeking an overview of perceptions and personal responses to a specific idea: a framework for professional learning for teacher educators in FE. The project is interpretative and constructionist by design (Silverman, 2013), and based on the notion of transformative learning (Cranton, 1994, 2002; ; Mezirow, 1997), drawing on a reflexive ontology (Door, 2014). The research project seeks to uphold principles of the significance of individual journeying, the relevance of collaboration and co-constructive working and the recognition of shared values, throughout. Analysis of data gathered from interviews and personal experience as auto-ethnographic engagement is approached systematically using an adaptation of Brookfield's lenses (1995), and makes use of processes of content and thematic analysis, some simple coding and, broadly speaking, a constant comparative method (Denscombe, 2010; Silverman, 2013) (Sections 4, 5 and 6). As I am both the researcher and a teacher educator in FE practices, the auto-ethnographic lens of this project runs throughout the whole

investigation, balanced by a thematic literature review and underpinned through recognition of the voices of practitioners (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2010; Ellis & Bochner, 2000) (Section 2.h.).

There are also elements of phenomenology that can be recognised in this research, if viewed in terms of its primary interest in the personal experiences of participants in relation to their professional selves (Denscombe, 2017), and the use of a direct approach to data gathering through open, yet specific questions at interview (Somekh & Lewin, 2011). However, the relation is limited as the focus is on the participants' views on a framework that they have not directly experienced, but rather asks them to respond to this *making use of* their experience, knowledge and expertise. Should the proposed principles prove robust enough to form the basis for a framework for professional learning, the next stage for developing this research would be to engage with a group of people in experiencing participation in a *pathway* which may lend itself well to a more phenomenological inclined methodology.

Not to be confused with phenomenology, Somekh & Lewin suggest that phenomenography may have a relevance to an investigation like this one, stating that it is:

a research methodology which seeks to identify and understand how human beings apprehend phenomena. [...] Through interview and other forms of data collection, the phenomenographic researcher seeks to identify the four or five typical patterns of awareness among a group about particular phenomena.
(2011, p.326).

As proposed by Marton (2014), in phenomenography although individuals or participants may each attribute different meanings, what can result are groups

of meanings, or patterns, which can be categorised. Again, this is not entirely in keeping with the intentions of this research project, in that it may not be possible or helpful to establish typical patterns, and instead what is being sought is a framework that supports a wide range of needs among practitioners; there may be underlying principles for the professional *pathway*, but one of the key factors is to maintain a flexibility that avoids over-generalisation of individual need. Also, phenomenography makes use of the immediate experience of participants and how they have understood phenomena, and as outlined above, this research project is asking for responses based on personal experience which is brought to bear on a *proposed* framework for professional learning. For developments of this research moving forward, a phenomenographic approach could prove useful but is not suited at this stage.

Similarly, although ethnography and ethnomethodology may share methods and some principles underpinning this research project, overall, they do not match with this investigation as there has not been observation in the field, or conversational analysis, or close analysis of social interactions, for example (Denscombe, 2017; Punch & Oancea, 2014; Somekh & Lewin, 2011).

Ethnography may be a forebear of auto-ethnography, but the emphasis here is on the relevance of the position of the researcher as a fellow participant in the research project overall and as a fellow practitioner, not as an outside observer of practices and behaviours, or offering a detailed description of a specific group. Instead, the significance is the relationship between me as the researcher and teacher educator, talking with fellow teacher educators about teacher education matters; a situation where the researcher's voice, my voice,

has close ties to the voice of other participants. In these terms this could be described as 'analytic' auto-ethnography rather than 'evocative' or 'emotional' (Anderson, 2006; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018). The significant difference here is that although there is recognition of the centrality of the personal experience of the researcher in auto-ethnographic studies, I concur with Anderson when he declares that he is:

concerned that the impressive success of advocacy for what Ellis (1997, 2004) refers to as "evocative or emotional autoethnography" may have the unintended consequence of eclipsing other visions of what autoethnography can be and of obscuring the ways in which it may fit productively in other traditions of social inquiry.
(Anderson, 2006, p.374)

An over-concern with the researcher in relation to the data gathered could lead to diminishing the voice of the other participants, rather than seeking a collaborative, co-constructive engagement. Anderson goes on to offer a useful, if simplified, definition for 'analytic auto-ethnography', stating that it:

refers to ethnographic work in which the researcher is (1) a full member in the research group or setting, (2) visible as such a member in the researcher's published texts, and (3) committed to an analytic research agenda focused on improving theoretical understandings of broader social phenomena.
(Anderson, 2006, p.375)

In terms of being a 'full member' of the research group, this relates to our shared experiences as our professional selves and the discussion around aiming to consolidate the notion of teacher educators in FE as an identifiable group. I believe that, although limited, my previous published texts as cited show me to be visible as member of the group (Exley, 2010; Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013). And thirdly, I declare, and hope, that this research project helps to evidence my commitment to engagement in research intent on the development

of theoretical understandings around the practices and perceptions of teacher education in FE.

As Anderson states, 'Autoethnographers should illustrate analytic insights through recounting their own experiences and thoughts as well as those of others' (Anderson, 2006, p.384), and through the interview process and my own engagement with designing an itinerarium and the start of a travelogue (Section 4.b.) this has been a significant element of this research project. And analytical auto-ethnographic methodology could be seen as a better suited approach, as a refinement of the autoethnographic described above from Ellis, Adams & Bochner (2010) and Ellis & Bochner (2000).

Anderson's paper from 2006 cites advantages and limitations of an analytical auto-ethnographic approach, and a particularly pertinent critical point is that: 'Most of us, most of the time, do not find our research interests as deeply intertwined with our personal lives as autoethnography requires' (2006, p.390). This has certainly been a concern for me even though I am part of the community of participants that have been interviewed; as a part-time researcher, undertaking research through studies towards a Doctorate in Education has created some unravelling of the intertwined aspects of this research. Having to manage the process has sometimes resulted in a loss of direction, and some difficulty in returning to the intended route of my journeying. However, I believe that this approach is a useful and suitable one for the research project as undertaken here; as he goes on to say:

All methodological approaches have their limitations. And all competent researchers must acquire not only the ability to use various research

skills but also the acumen to judge when some kinds of research are likely to prove more productive than others.
(*ibid.*)

Further to the points above, an argument of the inclusion of interview data and my own engagement with the framework for a *pathway* is that by bringing these two perspectives together, a more robust review of the proposed principles is achieved. The data from interviews and from my own engagement with the framework as proposed has been gathered simultaneously allowing for review and reflexivity: of folding and refolding in the manner of Deleuze and Guattari's ideas and their assertion that this can be 'why the most resolutely fragmented work can also be presented as the Total work...' (1987, p.6). It has also been important to have the views of practitioners who have not been involved in the design of the proposed framework involved in a review and revision of its principles.

The research project design offers two methods of data gathering: transcriptions of audio-recordings of interviews backed up by written field-notes (Denscombe, 2010, p.187), held with new and experienced teacher educators (Exley, 2010; Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013; Webster, 2014), and auto-ethnographic data collection. The interviews drew out key expectations, desires, newly emerging ideas about what *pathways* would offer for the individual as professional learning and what terrain it should cover. The auto-ethnographic data was collected through a variant of the *patchwork text* (Winter, Parker & Ovens, 2003) recorded as a wiki, based on my engagement with experimenting with the

itinerarium that initiates a travelogue and reflected my initial engagement with the process as practitioner, participant and as lead investigator.

Interviews were conducted with a group of fellow travellers – new and experienced teacher educators – who volunteered following a call for participants (Section 4.), and located through chain-referral sampling, and personal communication. Of the people who were in contact with me, six were available for interview within the collection period. Using the categories for sampling identified by Gobo (Seale, 2004; Silverman, 2013), the interviewees were an ‘emblematic case’, meaning that they were a legitimate, if small, sample whose authenticity arises from meeting the suggested factors (Seale, 2004, p.419). The factors cited are: being an average (interviewees came from across a range as new, or experienced practitioners from 1-over 20 years in teacher education practice); having excellence (they were all employed as professionals in their practice by colleges and universities); and being emergent (chain-referral sampling was used to access potential participants).

The biggest set-back of using the methodology and methods in this research has been the difficulty in accessing prospective teacher educators. Despite the use of chain-referral sampling to augment the direct communication through TELL (Section 1), of the three prospective teacher educators that I was put in contact with, two did not ultimately engage in the project within the timeframe I had, and the third (Karen) emerged as an ‘experienced’ teacher educator, which they recognised themselves, in keeping with the definitions that had been offered for each category (footnote 5.). To even more fully capture the

‘emblematic case’ for research into this area (Seale, 2004), a specifically focused and less time-constrained project might be better placed to represent the views of prospective teacher educators – a very significant and problematic field to investigate and one which is, in my view, needed for the continued development of this area of professional practice.

Individual interviewing is a convention of qualitative and education research methodological approaches (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Punch, 2009; Silverman, 2013). Much has been written on interviewing as a mainstay of research practice, and in summary, two key issues become apparent in relation to this project: the collegiality of practitioners, and the importance of professional dialogue in engaging with research-based problems (Baumfield & Butterworth, 2005; Cheng & So, 2012; Garcia & Nelson, 2003). This in turn led to questions of the impact of the ‘insider researcher’ (Bartunek, 1996) and the various costs and benefits of this role to the quality of the research (Wallace, 2013). Bartunek (1996) argues that it is critical to be clear about the definition of ‘insider’ used in research as meanings are derived from different epistemological roots. Even though this is not strictly an insider research project within an organisation of which I am a member, I would argue that I am an insider as a practitioner in a shared field of practice and epistemologically. I agree with Bartunek, that for this project I see myself as someone ‘making subjective sense of their own experience’, and that, essentially, I am asking the interviewees to do the same (Bartunek, 1996, p.13). And where Bartunek raises Merton’s concern that an insider might assume

‘(erroneously) that all insiders to a particular context think basically in the same way’ (Bartunek, 1996, p.14), efforts have been made to invite and support differences in view from interviewees, largely due to the diversity in the population of practitioners, as noted above.

This dance for positionality, of insider/outsider, is captured by Flick when he states: ‘researchers face the problems of negotiating and distance in relation to the person(s) studied [...] Being an insider and/or outsider with regard to the field of research may be analysed in terms of the strangeness and familiarity of the researcher’ (2009, p.112), and in these terms I see myself as both insider and outsider. I would argue that this research positions me both as insider and outsider researcher (Flick, 2009). This strange, combined role may have contributed to my experience that, when meeting interviewees face-to-face, on that particular occasion they were ready, willing and able to talk about practice whether new to, or experienced in, teacher education. As we talked, the semi-structured questions invited conversation between colleagues and peers, around the themes and topics in the questions – professional dialogue (Baumfield & Butterworth, 2005; Cheng & So, 2012; Garcia & Nelson, 2003). The discussion was about shared experiences, perceptions and hopes for the possibilities of professional learning in teacher education, raising questions of the role and impact of the interviewer (Denscombe, 2010). In these terms, this project meets the observation, made by Garcia and Nelson (2003, p.571) that: ‘Participation in professional dialogue assumes knowledge of a research community and the existence of a well-defined problem’.

The interviews created different ethical questions to these noted above, addressed through the Information Sheet and use of a consent form (Appendix 4). There were no immediately concerning issues, but discussion of professional and personal identity is as serious a matter as any other when gathering data with participants (Webster, 2015) [also see EdRESC Ethics Application Form 4 Nov 2015, provided in accompanying materials]. For example, interviewing colleagues as insiders/outsideers meant that we all needed to be aware of issues of confidentiality and professionalism. It also led to my decision to group or aggregate some of the data derived from the interviews around themes from the questions, rather than always citing single voices. The rationale for this is that if the participants are 'emblematic' of their profession (Seale, 2004), then a balance must be struck between a single point being made by a participant which could be significant, and giving an identification with the person who made that point. Essentially, in this case, the point made is more significant than the point maker (discussed later in this Section). However, in order to provide further context and reinforce the significance of practitioner voice, some quotations have been used and there are brief pen portraits in Appendix 9.

The vehicle for professional dialogue used in this project was the semi-structured interview. The suggestion of 45-60 minutes per interview actually ranged from around 40 to nearly 90 minutes. Any ethical concerns regarding parity and duration of interview time were ameliorated by using the same set of five semi-structured questions for each interview (Silverman, 2013) (Appendix

2). Each interview was an individual articulation of personal responses to the questions posed, based on practice experiences both personal and professional (Denscombe, 2010; Punch, 2009).

The questions were arranged thematically around the elements of the *pathway* as proposed at the start of the project: characteristics and qualities; milestones; professional learning; study approaches; portfolio evidence. The structure for the interviews was designed to provide a route through the elements of the *pathway*, building confidence through showing respect and valuing responses to help promote critical engagement with the design using semi-structured questions to allow for answers to be 'open-ended [...with...] more emphasis on the interviewee elaborating points of interest' but without moving too far from the questions to be answered (Denscombe, 2010, p.175). This approach is in keeping with the constructionist version of Silverman's three 'versions of interview data' where 'meaning is mutually constructed' (2013, p.168-169) (footnote 11 and Section 2.h). The themes were derived from the framework as proposed and, after a brief introduction reiterating and reviewing the Information Sheet previously provided (Appendix 4), began with two opinion questions about prioritising or developing the principles as listed. This opened up dialogue about terms and values, intended to build confidence through valuing individual responses. In turn, this led into a question exploring what interviewees understood about examples of related terminology, which was potentially more challenging, followed by a more prescriptive question, again valuing the opinions and selections of the interviewee in terms of their own learning

preferences. The final question was a more direct one, again asking for views, but this time for specific examples from experience or ideas for potential formats in relation to portfolio building. To end with, I was able to reiterate the four-fold model which also elicited some interesting responses pertinent to the project (see Section 5), but offered as a sharing of an idea for consideration rather than a direct question.

Silverman (2013) notes that there are two concerns or critiques of a constructionist approach to interviewing, and through analysis of the research project, these have come to light. Firstly, he cites 'narrowness' as a problem as interview data can be perceived as only having value within the context of that event – of it not having anything to say to wider issues (p. *ibid.* 185). However, Silverman offers a counter to this claim, citing Gubrium and Holstein who appear to suggest that this can be balanced, reflexively by the inclusion of both 'what' and 'how' questions – both of which are included in this project. More importantly, in terms of the ordering and by default the quality of engagement with questions as the interview process progresses, is the concern for inconsistency. As Silverman states, somewhat glibly, 'this is an important and complex issue with no easy answer' (2013, p.186). In this instance, I would argue that inconsistencies had been addressed to some degree through the use of a semi-structured interview strategy, but this could have been improved further by a more thoughtful ordering of the questions. By pacing them so that an early question is returned to later, there is the opportunity for interviewees to settle, reflect and respond, thereby providing a more authentic engagement.

Interestingly, the new teacher educators did return to earlier questions during the interview, but the experienced teacher educator group did not; this suggests that, particularly for the new teacher educators, a more thoughtful structure to the questions may have been particularly beneficial for whom reflection time was needed.

Being exposed to people's working practices through these questions - their attitudes and expectations as well as their personal views and lives - meant that at times I was drawn to similarly share anecdotes, reading, resources. This is a recognised phenomenon, referred to by Denscombe (2010) as the 'interviewer effect', and noted in the interviews done by Bourdieu who, with his team, found that it was only 'through an ever-vigilant self-reflexivity during interviewing, the researcher guards against the multiple complex influences of all the social pressure and traps' (Somekh & Lewin, 2011, p.7). Despite these possible influences and traps, I purposefully wanted to meet face-to-face with interviewees, and to enter the process through what Clough and Nutbrown describe as 'focused conversation as a research method' (2012, p.86). As they note, this is an approach which highlights the need to be conscious, 'that social research is persuasive, purposive, positional and political, and [researchers should] try to identify those features in the account' (*ibid.*). The impact of this approach on the data collection was clear before and during the interviews as well as in the reviewing of the transcripts in that there was an exchange of some experiences, theoretical ideas and resources, often with the purpose of seeking clarity through verbal, figurative examples. As part of a self-reflexive process,

these experiences meant that I had to be vigilant about trying to maintain an equally reliable and authentic experience for each interview as was possible, and to try to remain aware, at very least, of the influences and traps noted above. My initial intention to meet with interviewees at a place of their choosing, near their place of work, was so that I was reducing any inconvenience for the interviewee, and one of the unexpected benefits was that I was able to 'get the feel' of the setting, which Clough and Nutbrown offer as a rationale for taking a 'holistic' approach to research design (2012, p.29). As a result of meeting at these sites, both I, as interviewer, and the interviewee were affected in some ways by the spaces that we were able to meet in emotionally, physically and rationally – in one instance having to move into a different space due to ambient noise from other people. Because the questions were based on practice experiences I felt it was important to meet close to professional settings familiar to the interviewee, with the intention of keeping the conversation not only focused, but focused on professional practices. As Denscombe notes, there has to be a balance struck between being on the researcher's terms, where they may be more able to control events, and the benefits of making physical arrangements to better suit the interviewee, even down 'to being able to set up the seating arrangements in a way that allows for comfortable interaction between the researcher and the interviewee(s)' (Denscombe, 2010, p.182).

This particular research project is not able to address all of the extensive qualitative potential for investigation into such meetings and experiences, despite their interesting and exciting possibilities for deeper investigation.

Instead, in order to try to manage the huge range of qualitative data that would inevitably be collected, I used similar but personalised email communications with each interviewee, made use of the set of five questions and approximate time duration for the interview, and also made efforts to dress similarly for each meeting. This was consistent for all interviewees, including one whom I had met previously in my practice as a teacher educator.

As noted above, during the interviews, I was aware of my role as both an 'insider researcher', and at the same time an 'outside researcher' a position which can be a particular concern when being engaged in 'policy research' which could be said to link to this project as a design underpinning professional development (Somekh & Lewin, 2011, pp.10-11; Wallace, 2013). Punch (2009, p.44-45) lists these factors as 'disadvantages', whether of 'bias and subjectivity', 'vested interest', generalizability' or 'ethics', and some of these were clearly of potential concern in terms of the possibility that I might be accepting of seemingly shared understandings uncritically and falling into a collusive dialogue, albeit with benign intent.

By coming into the interviews aware, in part, of the potential concerns, I was better able to address them as far as possible. For example, by only having five questions and a reasonable time allocation for the interviews, there was time during our professional dialogue to check with interviewees, in the moment, that I had understood their perspectives clearly and that I wasn't subsuming their ideas and experiences into my personal paradigm view of the state of practices

in the sector. This wasn't hugely problematic, essentially requiring a rephrasing of what had been said in a 'call and response' approach, giving the interviewee the opportunity to agree or challenge my interpretation. Interviewees also had the opportunity to review the transcripts, which was another approach used to ensure authenticity on the data collected through this method.

Despite its potential dangers and disadvantages, the use of professional dialogue as a recognised approach to social and scientific research methods into practice (Garcia & Nelson, 2003; Leikin, 2005), and by association educational research, and has particular benefits to this project. Baumfield and Butterworth (2005, p.297) found that its usefulness in researching and developing practices in classroom settings was most effective when activities 'explicitly focused on immediate classroom practice'. Cheng & So (2012), however, cite professional dialogue as having impact in supporting confidence in professional learning more generally. For this project, the use of professional dialogue relates directly to participation in a professional *pathway* whether independently or a co-constructively, as both are envisaged as requiring a form of support or supervision as part of a process of individual professional learning. If working independently the professional dialogue would be a way to manage the support or supervision to suit that individual, whilst in a co-constructed approach the professional dialogue might form the baseline technique for communication between participants (Q.4, Appendix 2). As such, professional dialogue is a method used in the data collection, which echoes the proposed range of possible approaches to a *pathway*, further evidencing the self-

reflexivity of the project. Strategies employed in the interviewing process also link to developing a methodology of *creative praxis* through reflexive, innovative thinking and seeking impact on the world (Section 2.h). In this instance, the interviewing process was an opportunity for interviewer and interviewees to reflect on practice, sometimes acknowledging shared experiences, through professional dialogue. Innovative ideas were aired that might otherwise have not been spoken about, and interviewees were able to express their experiences of the impact of practice experiences on themselves and others.

As this research project has sought a review and possible revision of principles for a framework for professional learning, the interview data has been utilised to provide the basis for adaptation and amendments to a partly devised framework and so, methodologically, coding would be better achieved by selecting common phrases and words, as well as denoting deviations (Silverman, 2013). A combination of content analysis and narrative analysis was used. In terms of content analysis (Denscombe, 2017), each interview transcript was analysed alongside the audio and fieldnotes, question by question, with sets of responses to each question brought together for comparison to look for contrasting or singular statements or terms, frequently used, and positive and negative terms. The terms were identified as agreeing with questioning or challenging the ideas proposed in the questions, seeking individual responses to each enquiry. As no specific set of terminology was being sought, rather this was an invitation for interviewees to reply in their own terms, the interpretation of responses in this way enabled unexpected terms and phrases to be identified in its analysis

(Sections 5 and 6). Essentially, the recordings, field-notes and transcripts were few enough in number, and focused on specific points, to allow me to colour-code the text, identifying links and deviations directly on the page. Each transcript and set of fieldnotes was reviewed this way, then phrases grouped as both related responses to the questions, and as particular features that arose from individual interviews (Sections 5 and 6).

As most interviewees made use of anecdote and storytelling in their responses, in order to illustrate key points and for further clarification, there was also an element of narrative analysis, although the focus has been on the content rather than the form of the interview data collected (Denscombe, 2010; Punch & Oancea, 2014). As identified by Punch & Oancea (2014), this breaking down of the data into smaller and separated sections could lead to a fragmentation and a loss of context. However, with only six interviews and five questions to analyse, the process of looking at the responses question by question, but then also grouping them in the analysis as either new or experienced practitioners (Sections 5 and 6), was an approach aimed at maintaining a context for the key phrases and ideas. As this research is looking at responses to a set of principles and a proposal for a framework, the responses remained close to each theme of the question. Although some of the interview data did include wider discussion, the analysis aimed to maintain a focus on the topic of each question in order for it to be useful in reviewing the perceived usefulness, flaws or potential in the framework.

The intention throughout this project has been to include the voice of participants, but not as - to paraphrase Silverman (2013) - 'slabs of data' as long quotations or descriptions. Although quotes and phrases are included in the discussion and data analysis in this research, some of the findings have been aggregated (Section 5). Reasons for this relate to the interviewees being an 'emblematic case' (Seale, 2004), where an overemphasis on individual voices could be seen as contrary to them having been identified as representative of a particular group – Teacher Educators in Further Education practices. Through this approach both 'a voice' and *voices* can be distinguished in the text. Relevant participant responses have been utilised when reviewing and revising the framework and model as an analysis in itself. As the researcher, I am interpreting the original framework for the *pathway*, with its principles, categories and models, not just as a personal review, but more importantly as a co-constructivist review with peers – as both an outsider and an insider (Bartunek, 1996). By revising, interpreting and selecting patterns, deviations and contrasts within the primary data collected, using colour-coding on the page, or listing key words for comparison, the analytical approach used meets some of the expectations of thematic analysis and content analysis, as well as grounded theory through a constant comparison method as detailed in Section 5 (Denscombe, 2010; Silverman, 2013; Somekh & Lewin, 2011).

The second method of data gathering has been through personal experience with the framework for professional learning as the initial stages of engagement with a *pathway*. To do this I had to find a format that would be accessible to others, as well as one that would be meaningful to me as the subject and object

of personal engagement. For this element I used a wiki format for an *itinerarium* (Sections 2.h, 4.b, 5) (Appendix 8), with the intention of developing the idea of the *patchwork text* in a format that could provide a possible solution to the problem of accessibility allowing detailed engagement with its potential and problems as an approach to mapping. The *itinerarium* as a wiki also lends itself to forming the basis of the travelogue as the experience develops. Although this presented a challenge as a learning-curve for me as a reflective space, and through the process of construction, it has proven both interesting and useful (Sections 4.b. 5).

The wiki was designed around the format of an *itinerarium*, echoing the figurative idea of journeying on which this research project is predicated. Journeying for self-discovery through the acquisition, or refinement, of cultural knowledge, understanding and experience is not a new idea. As an ancient and continuing tradition it has parallels in the *hero journey* of early Greece, or the European or American *Grand Tours* of the 17th century. Each of these forms of individual yet public journeying contains within it the idea that travel is an effective way to gain greater moral, spiritual or cultural understanding; and journeying in itself becomes a significant part of the methodology of this research project. The purpose is understood to be that by undertaking this process, as a *pathway*, the traveller becomes more strongly linked with their values and those of their society, simultaneously gaining insight into a world outside of their immediate community and associated paradigm. The *Grand Tour* is therefore suggested as a way to help explain the *pathway* as it has a

specific aim with staging points or *places of interest* expected to be included in the experience. These ideas lie behind the notion that each traveller will need to devise the map that contributes to the framework for their *pathway*, to chart their journey, framed by particular sites to visit (Appendix 8).

The *itinerarium* is a seemingly rare but potentially very useful form of mapping (Sections 2.a, 2.f, 4.b and Appendix 8). Although not often listed as a type of map, the *itinerarium* has a rich and interesting history (Davis, N.D.; Dilke, 1987), and one which lends itself to the creation of a professional *pathway*. As discussed above, the professional *pathway* is a purposeful and intended engagement in a process of learning as *creative praxis*: of reflective, innovative thinking that has an impact on the world (Allen, 2012; Crouch, 2007; Prasad, 2015). This means that it is unlikely to be a fixed process and will need an equally flexible form of mapping and recording. Whether prospective, new or experienced as a teacher educator, the aim of this process is that, at journey's end, participants will arrive with a travelogue (Section 2.d). This travelogue will articulate critically reflexive engagement with experiences in each of the areas of the four-fold model for professional teacher educators (Exley, 2010) (Appendix 8).

Each professional *pathway*, and the evidence gathered, is specific to the traveller; journeying is individual. Using an *itinerarium* to structure the planning and preparations will help when discerning the intended route for journeying through the areas of the four-fold model (Appendix 8), supported by a framework comprised of some *places of interest* to be visited and examined,

and with features to look out for along the way. The notion of an *itinerarium* for this project can make use either of the main styles - as a map or painted itinerary, or a written itinerary. One of the most famous of the painted itineraria to survive from ancient times through various iterations is the *Peutinger* map, or the *Tabula Peutingeriana* (Davis, N.D.; Dilke, 1987) (Figure 1.). Basically, this is a route map indicating distances, features and staging posts. It changes system for measuring distances according to the culture through which the route passes, but is not topographically accurate as it compresses the scale north to south, creating a long thin representation of the journey.

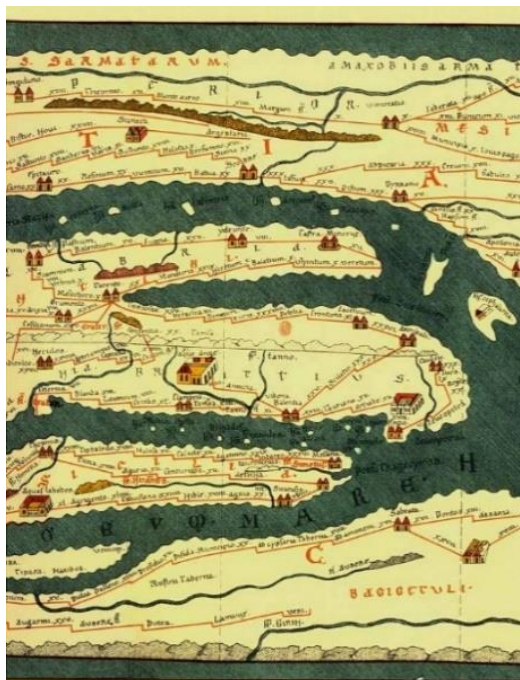


Figure 1. Part of *Tabula Peutingeriana*, Konrad Miller's facsimile from 1887 ([Public Domain](#))
For a *pathway*, the *itinerarium* encourages research into what is known prior to journeying, including staging posts, peoples or sites to be visited, whilst allowing for the document to develop as a record of information about the journey for others – a shareable representation of the plan and the experience.

A note is needed here on the mentor-guide (Appendix 8). Using the methodology as proposed and the figurative notion of the hero's journey (Section 2.d), the mentor-guide is identified with Campbell's 'helper' or 'supernatural guide' (Campbell, 1949, p.69, 73, 97) (Appendix 8). The role is described by Campbell:

For those who have not refused the call, the first encounter of the hero-journey is the protective figure [...] who provides the adventurer with amulets against dragon forces he is about to pass.
(ibid. , p.69)

These useful items, and any accompanying advice, help the hero as they enter into their journey, facing trails and challenges as yet unknown. Murdock refers to those in this role as 'allies' (1990, p.5), and cites their crucial role in the journeying process; Murdock also makes clear that these guiding forces can be 'inner allies' (1990, p.10), which is particularly noteworthy when considering the inner process of transformation and individuation that the participant is being called to engage with through a *pathway*. As helper and ally, the mentor-guide may also return to aid the hero at significant moments, or by sending agents to aid passage. This role is comparable to the role variously identified as that of a critical friend (Association of Colleges, 2014; Costa & Kallick, 1993), tutor or supervisor in educational programmes (including doctorates), and noted in the information sheet about the *itinerarium* (Appendix 1). And importantly, even if described as ally or helper, the mentor-guide role should not become one of collusion, but maintain the critical and questioning perspective that Costa & Kallick and the Association of Colleges (AoC) describe (1993). This may mean that the 'help' being offered can give rise to tensions and challenges, but these

should be dealt with as part of the transformative process – these are as much signs of change and discovery as are the pleasures of new sights and experiences that the traveller may encounter on their *pathway*. The particular role of the mentor-guide would, therefore, need to be agreed with the *pathway* participant before the start, but remain open to review and revision as the journey unfolds. As this proposed *pathway* is also purposeful and relates to professional recognition it is most likely that this role would maintain a supervisory aspect suited to the process. For a mentor-guide, commitment to the *pathway* is essential as their role as helper, whether ‘supernatural’ or not, will at times be vital to the participant and their completion of this journey.

To summarise the methodological approach to this project as the ‘route’: it is more than the line on a map. The route includes the manner in which the participant travels, identification of the sites and stopping points, and the form of the travelogue, which are all selected and negotiated within the framework by the participant along with their mentor-guide (Campbell, 1949). The level of engagement and of the materials produced as evidence would be according to the level at which the participant wishes to undertake the pathway. This would be reflective of the contemporary qualifications levels, currently Ofqual’s Qualification and Component Levels (Ofqual, 2015), and based on prior learning, qualifications and experience and agreed with the mentor-guide who, as in any such journey, will be able to offer support and critical guidance at points along the way (Campbell, 1949; Murdock, 1990). As a professional pathway, the journey would be completed within a specified period of time,

again agreed with the mentor guide. Once an overall journey time period is agreed, the *itinerarium* can be started in earnest, remembering that it is intended to be a flexible mapping of a journey, and may change. This is important as any changes will have consequences in terms of the overall time available and what can be achieved and will, therefore, need to be shared with the mentor-guide and any others who might be impacted by the changes. The route will include all of the elements of the four-fold model, and *places of interest* would have to be visited at least once, but the participant may decide to return to some to review or enhance their experiences.

More recently, the notion of transformative learning, and the journeying that entails, has gained interest in terms of teaching and teacher education. The vocabulary used around transformative learning makes use of related verbs and nouns - journey/journeying, learnt/learning - to help distinguish the modes of process as well as product, and to try to help underpin the significance of praxis in these forms of educational practice (Cranton & King, 2003; Dirkx, 2006; Mezirow, 1997). The importance of journeying for transformative learning leads us towards Jung's definition of 'individuation' as a greater knowing *of* ourselves as ourselves, but only when combined with knowing ourselves through our interaction with, and in relation to, others (Section 2.d). These matters are closely aligned. Jung sees education as one of the four stages in the process of individuation (Section 2.d): confession, explanation, education and transformation (Rowland, 2012). The ideas underpinning this proposed

framework are also about coming to know ourselves better, individually and collectively – as practitioners engaged in professional learning.

As a process of learning, the notion of a journey similarly relates to the Humanists' search for self-actualisation, and has echoes in Dewey's re-definition of what it means to be an individual, acknowledging the importance of society's role in giving value and meaning to those who form that society (Dirkx, 2000; Dirkx, 2006; Hildebrand, 2008; Taylor & Cranton, 2012). Journeying can enable and reflect individuation as we become aware of our relational selves, and so as part of this process the journeys associated with *pathways* will be mapped, recorded and critically engaged with as a representation of a professional learning experience so that they are more than simply a scrapbook of snapshots and souvenirs. Mapping and maps can simulate or represent the 'real', can aim to be a 'true' account as factual reality, or echo 'Deleuze's notions of mapping research as a way of making visible 'the image of thought' and new possible organisations of reality' (Cristancho & Fenwick, 2015, p.129). So, in summary, the type of journey could be described as one of individual transformation not in isolation but rather recognising the role and relationality of society and community in that process: an individual experience of exchange.

4. Description of the research setting, its context and participant population: what of the, places, continents, terrain, travellers and populations?

There are two main populations associated with this project: one is intended as coming from a group of people described here as prospective, new and experienced teacher educators in FE practice (footnote 5 and Section 4.a); the other is a much smaller population of one: me (Section 4.b). In this description of the research setting and its context, these two 'participant populations' are addressed in separate sections. However, as will be shown, there were instances of each population having an impact on the other in terms of appreciation of circumstances, developing deeper understandings of practice and journeys travelled through the folding of layers, of reflections and dialogue (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). It is seen that this interaction exemplifies Geertz' interpretation of Gilbert Ryle's notion of 'thick description' as being less significantly about methods, but rather of an 'elaborate venture' of the intellect:

From one point of view, that of the textbook, doing ethnography is establishing rapport, selecting informants, transcribing texts, taking genealogies, mapping fields, keeping a diary, and so on. But it is not these things, techniques and received procedures, that define the enterprise. What defines it is the kind of intellectual effort it is: an elaborate venture in, to borrow a notion from Gilbert Ryle, "thick description".
(Geertz, 1973, p.6)

By bringing together the methods and resulting data from both populations I am intentionally seeking to achieve a richer, more layered understanding of practices, beliefs and values, consciously embracing what Geertz saw in Ryle's work as the 'sort of piled-up structures of inference and implication through which an ethnographer is continually trying to pick his [sic] way' (Geertz, 1973,

p.7). The choice to bring an auto-ethnographic account into dialogue with the interviews with teacher education practitioners is to provide additional perspective and insight so that a more complex and nuanced understanding can be achieved. This is the approach taken enabling the project to engage directly and overtly with Geertz' declaration that:

The claim to attention of an ethnographic account does not rest on its author's ability to capture primitive facts in faraway places and carry them home like a mask or a carving, but on the degree to which he is able to clarify what goes on in such place, to reduce the puzzlement [...] This raises some serious problems of verification [...] of how you can tell a better account from a worse one. But that is precisely the virtue of it. If ethnography is thick description and ethnographers those who are doing the describing, then the determining question for any given example of it [...] is whether it sorts the winks from the twitches and real winks from the mimicked ones.
(Geertz, 1973, p.16)

By gathering personal accounts from participants and adding the auto-ethnographic experience of the researcher it has been possible to avoid the pitfall of 'interpreted data' or 'radically thinned descriptions' and instead capture the 'power of the scientific imagination to bring us into touch with the lives of strangers' (*ibid.*). As noted above, bringing these populations together also creates an element of grounded theorisation that supports, and results from, construction of understanding and ideas in 'real time', not just based on historical research methods that necessarily look *back to* – instead they enable the project to look *at*, in the *here and now*. However, it should be remembered that the journey through this project is largely my own, as the researcher, and although the participants are travellers along the way the nature of this project as being a proposal for a framework to support professional development, is actually already being enacted through my engagement. The itinerary has been

started, with the aim of ensuring safe navigation: that the journey is worthwhile and that preparations are robust, that the route is well-considered and the transportation suited to the terrain. In these terms the contribution of the participants is immensely important; I ignore their experience, insights and guidance at my peril.

a. *Prospective, new and experienced teacher educators in FE-related practices*

So who are my fellow travellers on this journey, how did I come across them and where did they come from? In short, they are colleagues and peers working in FE and HE settings found through a call to participate, and through word-of-mouth, all working in the field of teacher education for practitioners in the FE sector.

The project has sought to include contributions from prospective, new and experienced practitioners but this proved problematic in the timescale for this project (Section 3). This project is undoubtedly poorer for the non-contribution from the group identified as prospective teacher educators, and it does perhaps highlight that there is a need for this type of research, and for future projects to perhaps focus particularly on this group to try to ensure that their voice is included in the dialogue.

As discussed in the introduction to this thesis, teacher educators in FE have had limited opportunities to share their views on their professional journeys (Crawley, 2016; Eliahoo, 2016). Nor have they had many, if any, opportunities

to discuss and develop how they could contribute to their arrival at their destination as teacher education practitioners and be recognised as such.

Where there have been opportunities, research echoed in this project has found that practitioners felt that working with peers was a welcome aspect of the process of becoming a teacher educator, inviting professional dialogue and the potential for development. For example, this was highlighted by Pandita and Karen who both related how the process of applying for HEA fellowship using a portfolio of evidence was seen as a positive experience, and seems to provide a useful method for a constructivist approach to professional learning. However, some of the interviewees from this project had been in teacher education practices for over 10 years before entering into this process - a long time to wait to be able to enter into purposeful, professional dialogue recognised by a wider community. Happily, with the contributions being made to the sharing of practice by organisations such as TEAN and TELL (Crawley, 2016), steps have been made towards a more fulfilling journey for practitioners in FE and FE teacher education.

By providing a framework to support a journey of professional recognition the hope is that there will be benefits not just for those already engaged in this as professional practice but also for those seeking a related professional role. Similarly, there will be the opportunity for those outside of the role to gain a greater understanding of what is entailed leading to a wider recognition for practitioners. If a framework is in place, in this instance as an individually charted *pathway*, the anticipation is of greater recognition of teacher educators

in FE practices as being a particular, substantial and valued part of educational practice. As has been stated, one of the project aims was to include practitioner voice, combined with phenomenological research data derived from a personal 'lived experience' of engaging with an *itinerarium* and *pathway*. Through these approaches, this project has the potential to develop a greater understanding of professional learning for teacher educators from their own experiences or aspirational perspective, which is appropriate to the purpose and practices relating to this research (van Manen, 1997).

The individuals involved in this research project have emerged from a targeted population of practitioners – many of whom seem to be known only to each other through national and local professional practice, conferences and through professional bodies. The actual numbers of practitioners is difficult to access, which is also a result of not having 'a strong professional identity' (Crawley, 2016, p.5). Crawley cites the TELL network, the impact of Centres for Excellence in Teacher Education (CETTs) since 2007, and developments in organising CPD and in data gathering made by the ETF since 2013 as all having helped to formalise the expectations and enhancement of shared values within this practice area (Crawley, 2016). However, the sector still has no legal requirement for teachers to be qualified¹³ and retains a reputation as a sector being undervalued and unrecognised – a 'Cinderella' sector (Grubb, 2005; Hayes, Marshall & Turner, 2007; Kevin & Robin, 2011). Much of this points towards the view that without an expectation of qualification and 'a

¹³ For a brief time, around 2001-2012, there was a requirement that teachers in FE work towards qualification, although practitioners could still work in the sector without being qualified.

'comprehensive' governance regime' as is the case in the compulsory sector (Crawley, 2016, p.3), there have been few influential actions brought about by the self-supporting professional bodies listed above. This lack of a clear professional identity for teacher educators specifically in FE practice, and limited recognition through Government bodies and directives, is one of the key areas of interest in this project. Lunenberg & Willemse' fourth characteristic of any research aimed at supporting the professional development of teachers should include:

Efforts to enhance institutional learning by studying problems widely recognized in a teacher education institute and/or connected with their institute's standard tasks.
(Lunenberg & Willemse, 2006, p.96)

In this case, however, due to the lack of professional recognition, the need is not related to problems recognised within a specific institution, necessarily, but could be said to go more deeply, to be needed in UK national institutions. I would, therefore, paraphrase Lunenberg & Willemse and suggest that any such research should be making:

Efforts to enhance ~~institutional~~ *professional* learning by studying problems widely recognized in a teacher education ~~institute and/or connected with their institute's standard tasks~~ *sector and the values and roles within*.
(Adapted from Lunenberg & Willemse, 2006, p.96)

Crawley (2016) also suggests that this is a deeper problem and summarises a recent view of teacher education in FE where information on the sector remains limited, reliant mostly on information on the numbers of people registered with ETF as being trained to be teachers in FE, and nothing available on the numbers of teacher educators involved. He cites that data gathered by LLUK

over three years indicated that 55% of participants had undertaken their teacher training in universities; as this doesn't seem to distinguish between those trained for the compulsory sector and FE sector teacher training it doesn't give much detail to the picture (Crawley, 2016). Despite attempts such as these to gather data, what little there is doesn't differentiate between people trained within the sector or having moved into FE from the compulsory sector, leaving us to try to imagine how many teacher educators might have been involved in the training for teaching qualifications specific to the sector. However, data limitations aside, I agree with Crawley that it is not necessarily the numbers of teacher educators in FE that is the issue, but more that they could be regarded as 'invisible educators' (2016, p.1) only recognised within particular areas of practice and in universities that offer this as a specific ITTE route.

A Cinderella sector, employing the services of invisible educators, indicates that problems for researchers should be anticipated. For example, how was I to contact the participant group, and would I be able to find participants with whom I, as the lead researcher, was not already well acquainted? This could lead to claims of invalid data being collected though insider researcher influence (Bartunek, 1996; Flick, 2009; Punch, 2009; Wallace, 2013). As the project developed, some issues proved to be less of a problem than was anticipated with regard to new and experienced practitioners, who were contacted through a national professional body, the TELL (2016), and through chain-referral sampling (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981; Shaghaghi, Bhopal & Sheikh, 2011). However, this did appear as a serious consideration when it came to

prospective teacher educator data collection, as is explained further in Section 3., where due to possible participants not responding after their initial enquiries, eventually prior contacts were followed up to try to find prospective teacher educators.

An equally important point with so few participants, and despite redacted interview data, was that it could be very easy for participants to recognise either themselves or even each other through detailed descriptions of their type of work, areas of interest and conditions of service, for example. This is particularly the case when using chain-referral sampling (Section 3) as at some point interviewees will have actually suggested others by name. Therefore, unless necessary for the point being addressed, for ethical reasons, these forms of description are kept to a minimum, and the focus remains on the responses to the interview questions and the overall professional dialogue, albeit an asynchronous one. In addition to this, the codes interviewees were allocated for use during the interviewing and checking process, were then completely re-coded when writing-up (footnote 8). As stated by Somekh & Lewin (2011, p.26):

Anonymization is a procedure which offers some protection of privacy in its aspiration not to identify people, but it cannot guarantee that harm may not occur [...] The context, unless massively disguised, often reveals clues to identity even when names and places are changed

The need for sensitive approaches to locating participants, and using open questions to gather responses, is recognised as the second of the characteristics in Lunenberg & Willemse' design to 'support the professional development of teacher educators', namely that it is aiming to identify and

maintain: 'Respect for the (vulnerability of the) teacher educators involved' (Lunenberg & Willemse, 2006, p.96). By using chain-sample referral and asking for data collected to be reviewed by the participant, for example, demonstrates that: ' Efforts [have been] made to involve them in the problem definition, in conducting parts of the research and/or reflecting on the findings' (*ibid.*).

By using the definitions of groups of teacher educators working in FE practices as being prospective, new or experienced (Exley, 2010) (footnote 5) the objective has been to gain a broad view that will improve the quality of the proposed *pathway*. Through being able to include a range of perspectives it is more likely that the resulting framework will be relevant in a broader landscape of practice. For these reasons, a call was made for participants in this research project through the Teacher Education in Lifelong Learning research network (TELL) (Appendix 3 - Call for participants 26.1.2016). With over 200 members, the network was felt to be a close-fit as a probable contact point as it is made up of practitioners in FE and HE, all of who are in some way connected to teacher education and training in FE practices (Teacher Education in Lifelong Learning (TELL), 2016).

Initially, only experienced teacher educators responded, but by sending out a second call this developed to include new practitioners. The intent was also to contact prospective practitioners, identified through chain-referral sampling by asking other participants to suggest someone they knew who is considering or seeking the role of teacher educator. The process of chain-referral sampling is

particularly useful in circumstance where there is a difficult to locate population, within an already small population of possible participants (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981; Shaghaghi, Bhopal & Sheikh, 2011). Used extensively in medical research into hard-to-reach populations, often involving highly sensitive health issues such as HIV and AIDS infection, misuse of drugs, and other, socially complex health-related circumstances, it nevertheless has difficulties as a method. The most often cited problems are clearly described by Shaghaghi, Bhopal & Sheikh (2011, p.online):

As Heckathorn et al. [...] stated the main criticism about chain-referral or snowball sampling is bias toward recruiting more cooperative subjects and masking which is protecting close friends or relatives by not referring them when specially there is a strong privacy concern associated with the subject of the study. It is also suggested that those with extended personal networks to be over-sampled and isolated people to be excluded in the study.

Some, but not all, of these issues also relate to this study. Yet, researchers should be mindful that by asking for volunteer participants, as was the case with TELL, and inviting participants to recommend the project other potential participants, there is the danger of 'cooperative' subjects, who are maybe particular positive and un-critical of the process and ideas put forward. However, the discussions that emerged with interviewees located this way resulted in very useful professional dialogue and a critique of the ideas in focus. It is felt that because part of that invitation to engage was as contributors to developing an idea, rather than agreeing to it uncritically, also supported valid and reliable contributions through a critically reflexive and constructivist approach (Section 1).

There is also a real concern noted by Heckathorn (2011) and Shaghghi, Bhopal & Sheikh (2011) about over-sampling of a population, which is also why the original call for participants included the request for persons to be otherwise unknown to me, rather than known colleagues (Appendix 3). In terms of the over-sampling of prospective teacher educator participants, for whom the chain-referral sampling method was particular intended, this is less of a concern as the group do not appear to have sampled specifically in any other research that has come to my notice during this project – conversely, the real problem was engaging them as participants, at all.

In order to maintain consistency and reliability, the interviews were approached similarly to each other, regardless of whether with new or experienced teacher educators, in terms of the duration and by making use of a set of pre-defined, semi-structured questions. These were not provided before the interviews, as the intention was to prevent it from turning into a 'test' of what the topics and themes of the project were. Instead, the Information Sheet of underpinning elements as provided as an overview of the project prior to the interview (Appendix 4), and a copy of the questions provided (Appendix 2) at the start of the interview, as a resource aid providing visual and kinaesthetic engagement, and as something to support discussion if needed. Then the questions were introduced and discussed, with field-notes being taken by the interviewer, and audio-recording taken for later transcription. The field-notes and transcribed audio recordings were intended to provide a supportable version of the interview when being analysed away from the event. Field-notes, although

more traditionally taken when observing rather than when engaged in dialogue, were selected so that immediate responses from the researcher could be recorded without necessarily interrupting the participant, and particularly to record unusual, possibly fleeting points, which might be missed in the sweep of text that would emerge through transcription (Denscombe, 2010).

As noted above, participants were gradually discovered and located and, through interviews and chain-referral sampling, the group grew large enough to demonstrate a small cross-section of practitioners, as an 'emblematic case' (Seale, 2004; Silverman, 2013), but only meeting two of the three categories of participants as prospective, new or experienced teacher educators in FE practices (Section 1, 3 and footnote 5). One important lesson from this project has been that as a researcher, despite the pressures, the process must be respected and not be adapted to the apparent needs of the project. In this instance, despite my desire to create a map or account of the landscape of current practices from as many viewpoints as possible, the participant who I had anticipated being a prospective teacher educator, turned out to be an experienced teacher educator. This was entirely in keeping with the definition I had offered, and meant that a key point of interest was reiterated: the difficulties of identifying prospective teacher educators in FE practices. Although at first glance the project is poorer for the lack of this voice, it does, however, underpin an aspect of the original rationale – that there is a need to strengthen professional recognition in the field of teacher education in FE (Section 1). This group are hard to reach, and even though suitable methods were selected to

reach them, it would appear that researchers must travel further, and be allowed more time to pass through possibly rougher terrain, in order for their voice to be heard and included in accounts of the territory.

In total, the small group contacted included five experienced, two new and two prospective teacher educators in FE practice. Of these, four experienced, and two new practitioners participated in interviews. Jointly, the experienced practitioners had over 38 years' experience as teacher educators, and the new practitioners a combined total of just 4 years. All were women, including the non-participant contacts. This may be a sign of skewed collection procedures, but could also be said to replicate the proportions of women employed in these settings (Education and Training Foundation/Frontier, 2014). However, it should be recognised that along with the limited voice of prospective teacher educators, male teacher educators in FE practice also appear to be a minority whose voice may need researchers - willing to cross more difficult terrain - to make contact in order for them to join the dialogue. In terms of the sampling methods used, referral sampling may create a gender bias if it was perceived that women might be referring the researcher to other women as friends or colleagues. As this is unknown data in this project, a next step might be to actively seek a wider range of participants as a more representative of Gobo's 'emblematic case' (Seale, 2004, p.419; Silverman, 2013, p.386). Also, in this group the majority worked in HE settings, mostly Universities, and a minority in FE colleges. This may not be representative of the workforce, as it has been seen that the role of 'researcher' is not a widely accepted as a key aspect of the

FE teacher educator's role – and is recognised as one of the developments that this project seeks to address. Of the participants, all were either employed in or had been employed in FE settings. Because the initial sample group came from a call for participants through a research network (TELL), it could be argued that the participant profile was more likely to be employed in HE settings where the need for research as part of a role is more widely accepted, and that this may have skewed who responded to the request, as well as their views on teacher education for this sector. This was a point noted by participants as this aspect of their professional identities were discussed in response to the questions at interview (Sections 5. 6). A suitable summary note would be that, for future research, a more proportionately representative group might consist of prospective, new and experienced practitioners, of mixed gender, working in both FE and HE settings. However, for the purposes of this project, aimed at having impact on a specific field of practice through a constructivist methodology, I argue that the small number and emblematic nature of the participant sample remains useful, and that the use of the detailed literature review and an auto-ethnographic element bring sufficient validity to the project as a whole through a triangulation and a folding in and over of data.

b. Auto-ethnographic participation

And now, what of this participant – this traveller? In short, I am a colleague and peer of the group above - working in FE and HE, found through a call to participate that I heard coming from my own practice and by word-of-mouth at a

conference in 2009¹⁴, working in the field of teacher education for practitioners in FE settings. In this way, even though I may not be ‘coming to know the ‘insider’ perspective by observing participants going about their ‘ordinary’ business in their ‘natural’ setting’ (Somekh & Lewin, 2011, p.55) I argue that I am an insider researcher (Bartunek, 1996). I am sharing the journey as an insider would: cognisant of and familiar with practices, with a professional language in common and recognising ‘Stories from the Field’ (a term used through Somekh & Lewin, 2011). But now for the more detailed account...

Yes, this is, or rather I am, a very small participant population but, treated with thought and care, with ‘intellectual effort’, the data gathered from this tiny sample becomes detailed and rich: ‘an elaborate venture in, to borrow a notion from Gilbert Ryle, “thick description”’ (Geertz, 1973, p.6).

By undertaking a version of the pathway, myself - as the project unfolded and developed - I was able to link and layer my own experiences around those as articulated by the parallel participant population. This highlighted similarities, as well as differences; it consolidated and challenged my own views and conceptions, enabling ideas to emerge, merge and re-emerge as the data was collected, analysed, and finally critically evaluated. Over this auto-ethnographic journeying there were 3 main steps: the *itinerarium*, the *travelogue* and finally the evaluation of the process best represented as being this thesis (Section 5).

¹⁴ ‘The original ideas on which this [sic] research is based were formulated from a discussion between the authors at a Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETT) Conference in 2009, ‘Just Suppose’, a national Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETT) Conference, held at the Eden Project, Cornwall’ (Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013, p.4).

It was anticipated that the *itinerarium*, as a contribution by an auto-ethnographic element of the project, and this thesis would be the only parts of the overall journey to be completed within the time-scale available. However, the travelogue would be likely to be in its early stages, too, due to the synchronous nature of all three steps. I would also suggest that this thesis and the work towards it is also an auto-ethnographic contribution to the project as a whole.

At workshop presentations given at the 7th TEAN Conference, 5th May 2016, and at the PloE/IHE Post-graduate Conference, 18th June 2016, the notion of the *itinerarium* had been greeted positively, with interest in the notions of mapping, journeying and the use of travelogues as ways of engaging with professional learning. These responses reinforced the feelings I've had at various points in this project. For example, there were some important 'Aha!' moments when pieces of the puzzle seemed to fall into place, summed up in the following list:

- The decision, shortly before the interim *viva voce* for this thesis project, to make use of the language of journeying and travelling instead of that of stitched textiles (mainly that of patchworking and quilting, knitwear or embroidery) to help define a process of becoming a teacher educator.
- The discovery of the idea of a travelogue (Brady 1999) as a way of recording individual, and sometimes vicarious, journeys to becoming a teacher educator. This also helped answer some of the questions posed through the process of that interim *viva voce*.
- The discovery of the *itinerarium* – a form of mapping that is topological, adaptable and can be readily engaged with by participants on a *pathway* for professional learning.

Together, these three points helped to create the vocabulary for this professional dialogue and engagement with a *pathway* for professional learning.

As has been discussed above, the start of a *pathway* is likely to be an initial call to adventure as discussed in Section 2.d; a personal and individual experience, internally or externally derived. For this traveller, me, it was through the contact with professional colleagues and peers at a conference in 2009 (footnote 15) compounded by my growing concern for the balance between professional identities as subject specialist and teacher educator (Section 1).

The creation of an *itinerarium* has become the next step, a process to help with planning and preparation, to be used to travel through the four domains suggested by the four-fold model for professional teacher educators. Although this is discussed in more detail in Section 5, it is worth noting here that as both participant and researcher through an auto-ethnographic engagement I found the experience has supported me in re-engaging with the four domains of the four-fold model for teacher educators (Exley, 2010). By using the sheet in Appendix 1 I was able to create my own *itinerarium* (Section 5). These four domains of the four-fold model form the basic design onto which the milestones or *places of interest* and staging points are situated, by and for the individual traveller's journey – and this was incorporated into my design. The *itinerarium* has been devised as something which can then be developed further, as the journey unfolds, through the creation of a travelogue, designed to clearly show the detail and stages within the process and the reflexive responses of the traveller as they engage in the experience. This step was also begun as I researched the ideas for a *pathway* through auto-ethnographic engagement. The language of the journey becomes embodied.

As a participant, the need to create, and begin to engage with a travelogue was a significant element of this project, and one which may deserve further investigation following this initial thesis. Its impact on me as a participant is expanded on below (Section 5), but it is important to state here that without an auto-ethnographic component to this project, through my engagement with a *pathway*, the findings and conclusions would, in my view, have been poorer.

5. Presentation of findings: what did the journey look and feel like - what was discovered?

Even with a small band of travellers, a shared journey can produce a wealth of experiences, memories and new ideas. A whole industry for travel and tourism exists encouraging us to have these experiences, providing offers of help with itineraries, transport, accommodation, insurances and advice on what and where to eat, things to do and places to go. Across cultures families take 'days out', teenagers trek the globe, pilgrims fulfil expectations and desires, daily commuters and householders look for short-cuts and convenience. Each trip creates memories, each meeting with the familiar and the unfamiliar creates or adjusts those memories, and we extend these experiences by sharing views and recalling events, building bonds through the process (Lehto *et al.*, 2009). There are industries built on helping us record these memories through still and moving images, through journals and blogs; social media now reminds us of past events through automated systems of memory recall and reinvention... not always with positive results (Dzieza, 2015).

On return from our travels we recall and revisit them – noting changes in terrain, the weather, the trials and the successes - recreating ideas, making sense of what we have sensed: what has been seen, heard, felt, tasted, smelled as well as what we have done. In our attempts to present and share how it felt and what it meant, we might even present our bodies as evidence of the experiences (Look how much weight you've lost! My poor blistered feet... What an amazing tan. A tattoo!!). Through images as illustrative examples, spoken

and written word sounds and tastes we build a shared understanding and try to communicate the highs, the lows and explain the details. In some ways, this journey as a professional *pathway* has been prompted by similar intentions to record, recount and share; one of the declared aims has been to make use of personal journeying as part of a shared experience of a co-construction of professional identity (Section 1).

The experience of this journey has been recorded through the written and spoken word (Section 4), and suggested formats for the *itinerarium* and the travelogue have included images. In terms of embodied evidence of the journey, one of the other declared intentions of this project has been to have an impact on practice. A physical change might be seen in our professional practices, a more confident recognition of teacher education practices in and for FE, through engagement with processes of formation or development as professional learning (Timperley, 2011) (Section1).

However - as with the hundreds of photos, hours of video, the postcards home, the blogging and the journaling - this journey hopes to be relatable and communicated effectively to an audience. Therefore, it will need to be structured well enough to hold a narrative, a thread that can be followed, a discernible pathway to be traced or deviated from... There is a story to be told here, derived from the data gathered, and this section will aim at looking through the recorded material, recounting the experiences and memories, as well as sharing the

emergent ideas, supported by the gathered materials. It is an articulation of the experiences; a recording, recalling and sharing the findings of this journey.

In order that the account be as authentic as possible, this section also offers a critically analysis of the findings using an adaptation of Brookfield's model designed to help us challenge 'our most influential assumptions' as these 'are too close to be seen clearly by an act of will' (Brookfield, 1995, p.29). In this instance, the adaptation below is designed with the purpose of using that same technique on both the assumptions about practice, and assumptions made in the research proposed for a professional *pathway*. The following section, Section 6., will consider the implications of the findings as a re-visioning of the original framework and principles, and in relation the four-fold model for professional teacher educators: as a subject specialist in your own field of practice; an effective teacher in lifelong learning; a subject specialist in the field of Education; as a researcher (Exley, 2010).

Section 4. also relates to the findings of this process, as the journey is reflexively reviewed using elements of Glaser and Strauss's grounded theory approach (Denscombe, 2010; Silverman, 2013), and their constant comparative method. The writing of the research project thesis mirrors the research project as process, through constant review and revision. The data here is partly derived from the field, and the aim is to discern a deeper theoretical understanding of how teacher educators in FE can enhance practice through professional learning, offering a framework that has been created by and with

practitioners, revised and moulded by their views and experiences. Although not in a conventional form, it could be said that there has been a constant comparative approach in this project as the data from literature, interviews and auto-ethnographic engagement has informed the creation and revision of the *itinerarium*, the travelogue, the framework and the project itself, throughout the process. As Silverman describes it, 'The comparative method means that the qualitative researcher should always attempt to find another case through which to test out a provisional hypothesis' (2013, p.376). In this instance, using *creative praxis* as a qualitative methodological approach, has supported a range of 'cases': from the perspective of available literature, a series of interviews and an auto-ethnographic case. In this and the following sections, the data and its implications will be reviewed culminating in a final section intended as a summary, by way of conclusion, but with the purpose of looking to the next step for this project rather than its completion.

By presenting the findings through a dialogic approach, bringing into conversation the literature, interviews, field-notes, transcripts and auto-ethnographic elements, it is hoped to achieve 'thick description' of the experiences and contexts associated with the research (Geertz, 1973). This is in keeping with the qualitative methodological approach, the methods and techniques used in this research (Section 3).

Having recorded the data for this project, recounting it is not going to be tackling through a linear analysis based solely on the questions from the interview. Nor

is it a chronological ordering from the original proposal, any changes made during the project, followed by adaptations identified through the interviews rounded off with an auto-ethnographic review. Instead, it will be approached thematically, using an adaptation of Brookfield's lenses to help provide structure to the process of critical analysis (1995). To look to Brookfield seems particular pertinent in analysing the findings as his lenses and model are intended for investigating educational practice (Brookfield, 1995) and relate to gathering data from prospective, new and existent teacher educators in FE practices (Exley, 2010; Webster, 2014). The need for his model to be adapted is argued for this thesis because although the final piece of work brings together a range of views or perspectives, it uses a different figurative notion. The language for this analysis is based on a figurative notion and vocabulary of the traveller, the pathway, journeying and mapping, rather than Brookfield's (1995) lenses, focus, mirrors or illumination used to help us see his particular figurative idea. The figurative notion of the participant being on, or engaged with, a *pathway* as a dynamic engagement does, however, echo Brookfield's model in its identification as a *process* of critical reflection.

It has been useful to review Brookfield's model, and adapt it to the language of this project in order to more suitably capture the themes and intentions. For example, the interviews with fellow travellers have been made use of in real-time as field-notes, audio-recordings and later as transcripts, all feeding back into the original framework model and adapting it. Similarly, the auto-ethnographic element has been created through creating an *itinerarium*, and the

beginnings of engagement in a *pathway* by me, as the researcher, using a wiki - similar in style to an e-portfolio as a variant of a *patchwork text* - as a representation of a travelogue (Webster, 2015/2017).

Given the purpose and format of this project, the auto-ethnographic experience of a *pathway* is as the beginnings of a travelogue, which only reflects the form of a *patchwork text* at this stage (Winter, Parker & Ovens, 2003). Ideally, the wiki would mirror this approach more closely in a fully presented participation in a *pathway* through collegiate engagement and collaborative working. Currently the wiki is more akin to an e-portfolio, as the collaborative or co-constructive engagement of others in its creation has been limited by the purposes of it for the doctoral thesis. I would go as far as to say that it could have remained a 'pile of scraps', had it not been for the particular features of the wiki as a hypertext (Section 5.a.2), and with its potential to be finally stitched together should a colleague, peer or supervisor become involved. Under different circumstances I would hope to engage with others in collaborative participation to enhance and further realise the potential of the wiki; I saw for myself the benefits of having a mentor-guide.

It is also important to note that this format, the wiki and reference to the *patchwork text*, is specific to me as the researcher engaging with a *pathway* as an auto-ethnographic research method. It is aligned to my preferences - the notion of crafting, patchwork or patchworking, hence the relation to the *patchwork text* (Crawford, 2010; Gauntlett, 2011; Korn, 2013; Sennett, 2008).

Others participating in a professional *pathway* would be prompted and supported in designing a route with a format suited to their own paradigm. For my engagement with a *pathway*, the notion of 'patchwork' - as crafted practice constructed from patches, not just a 'pile of scraps' - has been interpreted as a wiki. This approach, along with the other primary data findings, is analysed using an approach based on Brookfield's model of using 'lenses' to analyse and evaluate practice. In this way it is hoped to improve the reporting and recounting of the experience of the research process in a systematic way, thereby improving communication of the analysis.

Brookfield's original model uses four lenses to help us see and challenge our assumptions (1995, p.29):

They are (1) our **autobiographies** as teachers and learners, (2) our **students' eyes**, (3) our **colleagues' experiences**, and (4) **theoretical literature**. [Bold not used in original]

The resulting re-conceptualisation of Brookfield's four perspectives was arrived at in two stages. Firstly, I considered basing the adaptation of the four lenses on sensitivities, or aesthetic perspectives, relating to crafting from my own perspective. This version reflected the feelings and experiences of the textile crafter:

Being sensitive to our own **self-awareness** of autobiography as a crafting practitioner – quilter, embroiderer, knitter...

Being sensitive to the **subjectivity** of those who ultimately engage with the results of our practice – family, friends, customers...

Being sensitive to and **mindful** of peers and fellow practitioners – people in the crafting community, suppliers, studios, end-product retailers...

Seeking out **creative praxis**, as understandings and knowledge derived from both crafting and educational literature and theory -

used creatively and reflexively (Crouch, 2007; Crouch, 2009) for innovative, purposeful and creative actions

However, as has been discussed above (Section 2.d), this crafting-oriented approach has associated issues regarding gendered identification making it less suitable for use by the wide range of possible participants undertaking their own *pathway*. Therefore, in order to offer a less potentially gender-biased investigation, the main framework uses the language of the traveller, a more widely identifiable representation that, happily, also echoes the notion of the '*pathway*'. The next stage, therefore, was to devise a second variation of Brookfield's model for use a critical review of the research, seeking out assumptions as the findings are considered. In an attempt to continue the themes of this project, the four 'lenses' of Brookfield's original model could, therefore, be reconceptualised as 'perspectives on travelling':

Planning, recording and recounting of the journey by me, the traveller (e.g. *itinerarium*, travelogue...)

Dialogue with fellow travellers whilst travelling – teacher educators (e.g. interviews, field-notes, transcripts...)

Sharing of the experience with professional colleagues and peers during and also on return – supervisors, examiners and researchers in related areas (e.g. through supervision meetings while researching this project, conferencing and in defence of this thesis)

Exploring associated literature and theoretical knowledge to help provide context: of the terrain, its history, geography and of previous journeying for planning and during the trip – for both specialist-subject related and education literature (e.g. the literature review above in Section 2. and this thesis if it contributes to the canon)

The following is a systematic account and analysis of the findings making use of the ‘perspectives on travelling’ as identified above.

a. Planning, recording and recounting of the journey by me, a traveller

Although one of the declared purposes of this piece has been to listen to the practitioner voice, it is also undeniably a personal journey. As noted above, there have been elements which relate specifically to me as the person engaged in the process – in many ways the whole project is an auto-ethnographic account. It has been challenging, exciting and creative, and one of my personal findings has been a strengthening and growth in my understanding of my role as a researcher. My engagement has been captured through the design of the wiki for the beginnings of an *itinerarium* and travelogue, and its adaptation to a format of my choosing.

1. The *itinerarium*

As the auto-ethnographer, my *itinerarium* and travelogue have been a pilot to see how the idea of a *pathway* might be made evident through a wiki format, and how these might appear in an accessible and useable form (Sections 2.f, 3). As the trail-blazer and path-finder, my role was to try to discern a suitable format, or formats, for evidencing the journey in its planning stage and during the experience, and to ‘test’ the suggested approach. By using the original *itinerarium* sheet devised during this project (Appendix 1; Figure 1.), I was able to draw together some of my very disparate ideas, each then being more able to support the other. This opened the way for me to begin to discern the way my

own *pathway* could be evidenced as an auto-ethnographic perspective on the processes and possibilities of professional learning (Section 3).

From my background as a crafter and artist, my first and personal preference is for the notion of patchworking and I lean towards a *patchwork text* approach for portfolio building (Winter, Parker & Ovens, 2003). However, I made the choice to use the figurative notion of a journey and of journeying and to use a wiki for the *itinerarium* and travelogue. The arrival at this decision was largely through the synthesis of two key points of discovery during this project: firstly, there was the identification of the process as being a professional *pathway*, and therefore the notion of the journey felt more synchronous; secondly, there was the discovery of Brady's (1999) article on supporting vicarious travel experiences through a travelogue, again, synchronising with the vocabulary of journeying and pathways (Section 2.d).

By using an *itinerarium*, as a variant of a map, I felt that there was a greater potential for a more widely understood figurative imagery and language to help explain the ideas and to encourage participant engagement (Section 2.d). This *itinerarium*, then, would be a way to prepare for my own journey through the terrain of professional development, aiming at the creation of a travelogue fulsome enough to confidently and convincingly demonstrate my continued engagement with professional learning. As has been proposed by this project, the resulting travelogue would need to evidence that I was working at an academic level appropriate to my level of prior learning and close to that of my

highest qualification (Section 3). Having an *itinerarium* as part of the *pathway* could help in communicating the planning and the experiences through a flexibly structured documentation of my reflections and reflexive engagement at an appropriate level. The form of the travelogue developed throughout the project, informed by the findings from interviews, literature review on professional learning. Significantly, it became clear that a participant might not start with an *itinerarium* in isolation from the travelogue, but that the *itinerarium* is part of the travelogue, and both are created and re-interpreted through journeying (see 5.a.2). Although there were some changes, my auto-ethnographic engagement with the project and the wiki remained based on addressing the principles – the *characteristics and qualities* of the participant traveller, as well as the features, milestones or *places of interest* of the terrain - seen as significant for teacher educators in FE.

2. The travelogue.

The format for my travelogue took more thought than I had anticipated, largely because I had mistakenly seen them as linear – *itinerarium* first, travelogue second. My first plan was to create a physical map of a territory, perhaps based on an old navigation chart or something similar, which I would then adapt to the purpose of demonstrating my journey. This *itinerarium* would then form the basis of the travelogue. I sought out and found examples of maps and travelogues, such as the ones below (Figures 2. and 3.):

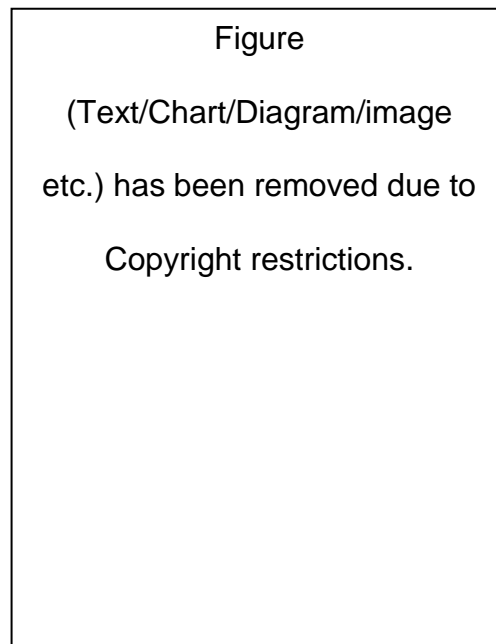


Figure 2. Ordnance Survey and leisure maps.

I had imagined that real maps would fire my creative side, inviting interesting imagery in the manner of the ancient maps discussed in Section 3. However, I was surprised to find that, instead, it seemed limited by its two-dimensionality, and didn't allow a sense of dialogue, or multi-dimensionality that I had envisaged.

The next format that I discovered was a specifically designed travelogue by an innovative company, *Luckies of London* (*Luckies*™), which took on the form of an interactive book with scratch-card styled maps (*Scratch Map*™), notebook and pockets for items of interest – and this seemed much more promising... (Figure 3.)



Figure 3. 'Travelogue Travel Journal' by Luckies of London (Luckies TM)

I considered ways to adapt this design into a record of an 'inner' journey rather than a physical, geographical one and this did show some promise as a format, and even approached *Luckies* TM to make sure they would be happy for me to adapt their design for the purposes of this project, which they agreed to¹⁵. But, as a busy practitioner, I have to admit that the pleasure I found it playing with the design did prove time consuming and even though it helped develop my creative engagement, I was having problems feeling that it was accessible enough on a wider basis. It also held problems in terms of co-construction and

¹⁵ Permissions have been granted by *Luckies of London* (Luckies TM) for the use of images of their travelogue in this project.

collaboration, although these may be surmountable given a more focused commitment to this format.

What surprised me even more, was that I settled on an electronic format for the expression of my *itinerarium*, which became the beginnings of a travelogue. I wouldn't have positioned myself as a participant who would feel confident with a digital format, although I would say that I have maintained a curiosity for the trappings of the digital age. I got my first mobile phone in the early 1990s, closely followed by my first desktop computer - an event brought about through my return to education as a mature student taking an undergraduate degree. I would ordinarily be defined as being part of 'generation X' and a 'digital immigrant' (Jones & Shao, 2011; Prensky, 2001b; Prensky, 2001a) – but I would echo Poloski Vokic & Vidovic in their declaration that 'What matters is digital age not digital nativity' (2015, p.online) and with Waycott *et al* (2010) who suggest the need for a more sophisticated approach to the commonly recognised generational differences.

My choice of format for my *itinerarium* and the start of my travelogue would suggest that I may, to my surprise, have become a 'digital resident' (Jones & Shao, 2011, p.12). My evidence for this (to my mind) startling suggestion is that when given the opportunity to create a real-life object, with paper and paint,

colours and textures, with obvious three-dimensional physicality, instead I chose to make use of a digital approach¹⁶.

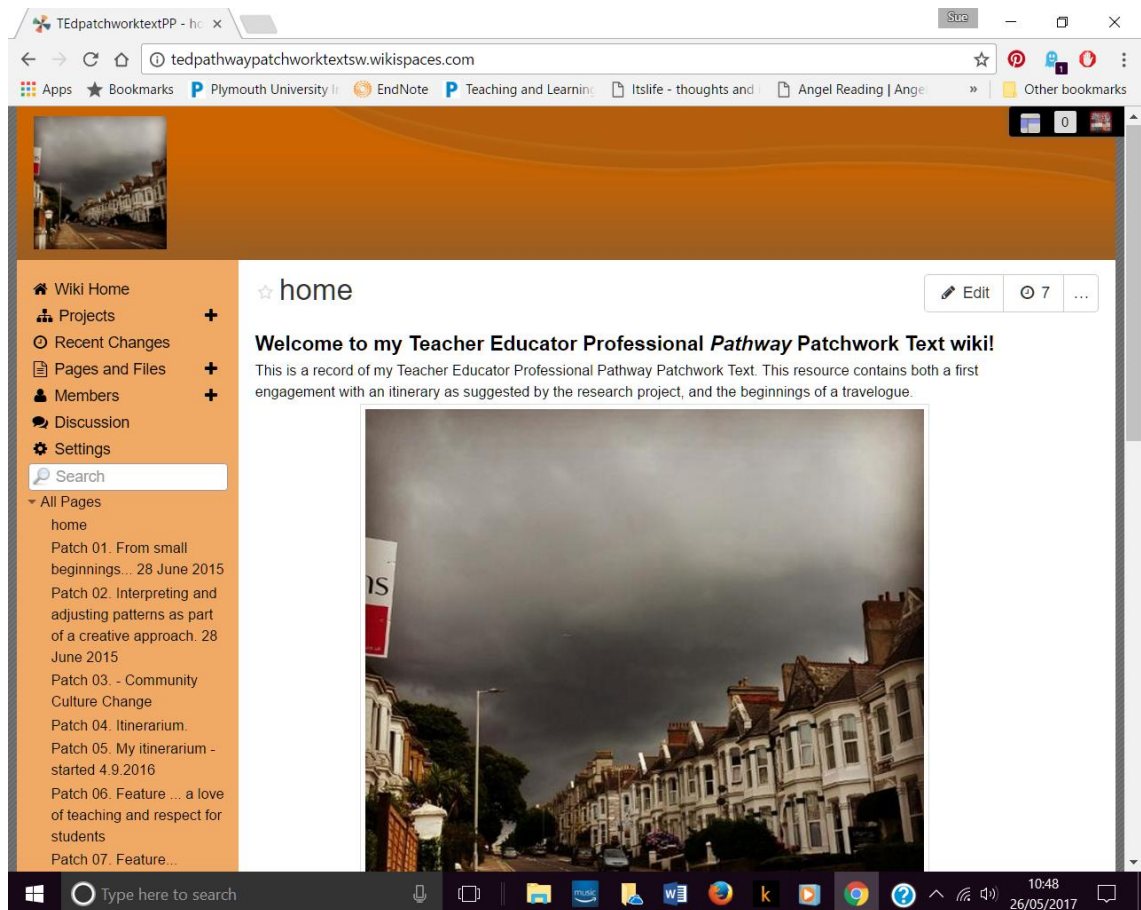


Figure 4. 'Teacher Educator Professional Pathway Patchwork Text' wiki

When I needed a format for documenting a journey I needed something that would allow the use of text as reflective writing and images, and yet remain

¹⁶ This was based on experiences I had enjoyed as a distance-learner in the early 2000s. I had used a wiki to provide evidence of work I had made when taking a City and Guilds distance-learning course with the School of Stitched Textiles (School of Stitched Textiles, 2017). For the units in that course I had to document my stitching, sketchbook and written pieces of work, and make use of a digital drop-box system for assessed submissions to be uploaded via cloud computing, which assessors then retrieved for marking and by which they returned my feedback. To deal with this new form of submission, I decided to make my first 'wikispace' (TES Global, 2015) which allowed easy transition between platforms and a useful space for keeping both text and images.

three-dimensional in that it could be navigated across, between and through the pages, not just as a linear or two-dimensional object – otherwise known as a hypertext¹⁷. By selecting a wiki I also made the link to *patchwork texts* and collaborative or co-constructive portfolio working (Dalrymple & Smith, 2008; Winter, Parker & Ovens, 2003). This was a revelation when I first discovered it: wikis offer the opportunity for individual study, accessible evidence building and for shared working with peers, supervisors and others (Appendix 8).

Interestingly, this also links into suggestions, and encouragement for innovation by Crawley as he discusses the significance of ‘technology-supported CPD’, which he states is based on a design ‘constructed by Laurillard and Ljubojevic (2011)’ (2016, p.62). These ideas tend towards using technologies of this sort, including wikis, particularly as a way to structure and support pedagogical practices in the classroom through e-learning. In a later paper, Laurillard *et al.* expand on the ideas a little but the focus from remains on making ‘the case for a learning design support environment to support and scaffold teachers’ engagement with and development of technology-enhanced learning, based on user requirements and on pedagogic theory’ (Laurillard *et al.*, 2013, p.online). The usefulness of their work in terms of professional development are the link to one of the proposed *characteristics or qualities* of a teacher educator’s professional identity, relating to ‘having good communication skills’, as well as

¹⁷ I first discover the benefits and challenges of hypertexts through Jackson’s *Patchwork Girl* (1995) - see Appendix 8.

evidencing one of the domains of the four-fold model as being ‘an effective teacher in lifelong learning’ (Sections 3, 5).

From an auto-ethnographic perspective, assumptions I had made about the format for the *itinerarium* and travelogue were challenged as were my perceptions of myself as a crafter and digital resident. The process of auto-ethnographic engagement with this whole project, through creating my own *itinerarium* and beginnings of a travelogue, this research project and thesis has also challenged my assumptions of myself as researcher and practitioner. I had not anticipated how important the creation of the literature review would be for me, and how exciting it has been to draw together so many aspects of my practice and myself.

b. Dialogue with fellow travellers whilst travelling – teacher educators

Above I have examined the experience as an auto-ethnographic one. In order to challenge assumptions I may have made when designing the framework for this project, Brookfield (1995) suggests using different perspectives, and a constant comparative approach urges the same (Silverman, 2013). The fellow travellers for this project are identified here as the people I interviewed. This project has, as one of its main purposes, an intention that the voices of practitioners in the sector would be included. Therefore, although it could be argued that my supervisors and colleagues could also come into this category, it seems pertinent to retain their character as separate from this latter group, discussed in Section 5.c.

Meeting with my fellow travellers, as interviewees, has been a dialogic process and one of the findings of this piece has been a greater understanding of the engagement of participants as interviewees with a researcher. As fellow travellers, the individual participants were located and contacted as has been discussed above (Section 4.a). The process of communicating with them was briefly via email, with only one or two phone calls for clarification of meeting arrangements, and otherwise entirely face-to-face at interview.

Despite careful planning of strategies as part of the overall research design process (Punch, 2009), the time from arranging the first interviews through to sending out transcriptions took far longer than had been anticipated due to difficulties in receiving replies to invitations, managing the practicalities of meeting for interview and, sadly, personal difficulties for potential interviewees and transcribers. Despite using a Gantt chart with buffer sections and broad timings, the original research plan was rearranged several times in order to keep the whole project on target, thus highlighting the limitations of such approaches even though they are a recommended tool (Denscombe, 2017; Lee, 2009). Where books and websites point out that planning is essential, offering ways to organise the process and talk about 'developing and critiquing research plans' (Clough & Nutbrown, 2012, p.179), what they cannot tell you are the specific difficulties that can befall you as the researcher or the people and practices associated with your particular research project. What this project has shown is that all you can do as a researcher is make use of your research

design and strategy plan as a way to enable you to maintain an overview of progress, and to adjust, realistically, according to the timeframe and expectations. In my view, the plan is best when it becomes your guide, not your destination.

An initial expectation of 6 months actually took closer to a year from first interview to being able to send out the transcripts for checking by participants. And even then the delays continued as of the six, four people requested copies of the transcript to be reviewed, but only two replied with an affirmative. The other two participants received emails asking if they were intending to review their transcription, but neither replied. As the Information Sheet (Appendix 4) suggested, participants would have access to their transcripts but in order to maintain confidentiality of the data, I elected to not send out a transcription unless it was requested in response to an invitation I sent to all participants on the same day, for parity. The reasons for only sending them in response to this invitation are ethical in that, firstly, I couldn't guarantee that the material had arrived with its intended recipient, especially given the length of time that it had taken to get to the point of being able to share these documents, and because there was also a request that anyone who did receive a copy deleted after reading and responding to it, for reasons of confidentiality of that material. This part of the process raised concerns for me about using electronic transcriptions and data handling. Not all participants used their work email addresses, and this added to my rationale that I would not send out transcripts unless directly

requested – personal emails can be open to family and friends, and felt less secure as a method of distribution.

I also want to note that emails sent out to participants followed almost identical formats, and I made efforts to be consistent with how I addressed each person, the salutation used as well as the valediction. These may appear to be minor details in the rush of modern digital communication, but in terms of communication theory I was keen to maintain a consistent sense of social presence (Kim, 2011; Kim, Kwon & Cho, 2011; Short, 1976) and of relative media richness (Daft & Lengel, 1986) to minimise some of the influences that these can bring.

An initial assumption I had made about the project was that it would be quicker and more useful for me to only take field-notes plus the audio recordings of the interviews as this would be all that I needed. However, I was persuaded by supervisors to have the audio recordings transcribed – and this proved to be a good choice. Silverman (2013, p.282) cites a point made by ‘Atkinson and Heritage (1984) [... that...] the production and use of transcripts are essentially ‘research activities’ [...involving...] close, repeated listenings to recordings which often reveal unnoted recurring features of the organisation of the talk’. And even though I arranged for a professional transcriber to undertake the initial transcription, I found that the process of re-listening, checking the script and redacting them ready for sending to participants, was hugely helpful as a ‘research activity’. It reminded me of the dialogue and key points that my field-

notes had only alluded to, and also allowed an opportunity to hear all of the voices over a condensed period rather than spread across many months. The analysis of the findings below is based essentially on the field-notes, but supported by the transcriptions and audio records which I have used for clarification if needed; the field-notes were the chart I followed, but the transcriptions and audio recording acted as my travel guides bringing detail and specifications where I needed it along this part of the journey. As Somekh & Lewin put it: 'Transcribing is very time consuming but yields excellent data' (2011, p.134).

The interviews were designed to draw out individual responses to an existent, but as yet untested, framework in support of professional learning: the interviews, the literature review and the auto-ethnographic engagement all being designed to help critically and reflexively provide an analysis. In terms of 'challenging assumptions' (Brookfield, 1995, p.236), it was hoped that engaging practitioners in this process from a range of practices and experience would help to identify any hidden assumptions that had been built in to the framework by the original designers (Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013). From the interviews, the principles of the framework were presented in question form (Appendix 2), and the four-fold model of professionalism for teacher educators in FE practices shared in open discussion for individual responses (Exley, 2010). The findings of these interviews are drawn from the responses to the questions, and have been grouped as either 'new' or 'experienced' teacher educators, in the absence of any interviews with 'prospective' teacher educators (Exley, 2010)

(Section 4.a). Rather than citing direct quotations, the responses from interviewees will be grouped as they are emblematic of the group they represent (Seale, 2004; Silverman, 2013) – as either ‘new’ teacher educators or ‘experienced’ teacher educators.

The interviews were designed to engage participants in a shared critical examination of a range of aspects regarding the proposed framework as a professional *pathway*, and offered semi-structured approach with open and closed questions and topics for discussion addressing:

The principles as proposed for the framework of the *pathway* - the six characteristics and qualities, and the five milestones (Section 2.d), including the term ‘milestones’ in this context (Section 3)

The term ‘professional learning’ (Section 2.f)

Preferred approaches to participation in a *pathway* as a framework (Section 2.f)

Ideas for formats or features of portfolio working (Section 2.h on e-portfolios)

... and finally open responses to the four-fold model as proposed

Interviewees did not see the questions before hand (Section 4.a), to avoid the meeting as being seen as a ‘test’, but had been sent an Information Sheet to provide a context for the interview (Appendix 4). At each interview time was allowed for reading the suggested questions provided on a handout (Appendix 2). As the interviews progressed, the question sheet helped to create an interviewee-led pace to the interviews, with pauses for quiet and reading. Apart from a short introduction to the interview, the discussion was led by the

interviewee, in conversation with the interviewer, creating a dialogic approach with opportunities for clarification from and by both parties. This is in keeping with the constructivist epistemology and interpretative approach underpinning this project (Sections 1, 2.h).

In the following sections, Group 1. and Group 2., data from the interviews has been aggregated into two groupings, as either new or experienced teacher educators in FE practice. The interviewees raised various points and expanded on almost all of the ideas about the framework as proposed through the questions, and for both groups these have been recorded in relation to each question, with key phrases which contribute to developing the framework noted in bold type. Even though these are small groups - Group 1. was a group of two, and Group 2. a group of 4 – there are also points made that were particular to interviewees as either new or experienced and these are noted by using their pseudonym. As has been previously noted in Section 3., by grouping the responses in this way the emblematic nature of the methodology is maintained (Seale, 2004; Silverman, 2013), yet being able to note shared as well as individual voices helps to strike a balance between a single point being made by a participant which could be significant, and overemphasising a point made by just one person.

[Group 1. New teacher educators in FE practice.](#)

The participants classified as 'new' teacher educators had both been in a teacher educator role in further education practices for less than three years

(footnote 5). Their responses to the questions reflected this position and their current feelings of being less experienced in terms of this specific role, although they both also had previous teaching experience which they felt was relevant and significant as contributing to their professionalism. For example, Cristina and Ruth consider it important that they had either gained experience of teaching adults, had been involved in curriculum development before becoming a teacher educator, or felt that it was a breadth of experience in teaching that had been most beneficial to their current practice.

Turning from the introduction to the framework as proposed (Appendix 2), the interviewees were asked whether they were able to prioritise key elements from the list of 6 characteristics and qualities, and also whether they wanted to add to, or dismiss any from, the list. Although initially declaring that they were all equally important, through discussion both interviewees identified which they might prioritise, as well as adjustments they would make to some, and also, importantly, identified an area missing from the suggested principles. There was no indication that any of the characteristics or qualities should be dismissed.

Good interpersonal and intrapersonal skills and a love of teaching and respect for students, which was thought to be particularly important, were accepted as stated in the list. However, each of the other four characteristics and qualities were expanded on for clarity:

Having good communication skills: highlighted need to include skills in **e-communication** for sharing ideas.

At least some knowledge of Education as a specialist subject: identified as essential, but noted that this should include practice-based *and* **theoretical knowledge**, to augment modelling by the teacher educator

Some management experience, skills and knowledge: questioned and discussed in detail, particular that this relates to experience of **people management** rather than simply quality management, and should relate to **managing adults**. Also, extended the element to **include managing ourselves as professional practitioners, as teachers in practice**, felt needed to be included in ITTE programmes

A diversity of teaching experience across levels, subjects, or contexts: essential, but strongly suggested that this should **not be confined to experience in FE practices: diversity** is what is significant.

The missing element from the characteristics and qualities, which I believe arose specifically from interviewing new teacher educators, was the significance of and need to include **resilience**. Both had found the move into the role of teacher educator challenging and had not felt fully prepared for the realities of working with adult learners whom they had expected to be 'easier' to teach (Cristina). This seemed to be based on the expectations of both that, due to the nature of the course being professional development, there would be fewer issues relating to behaviour management and more sharing of what was referred to as 'adult conversation' (Ruth). Attempts to invite feedback had proven bruising, and both had found themselves challenged by having to help their students understand what was seen as the responsibility of their own journeys, as students.

This discussion then led into a question about the term 'milestone', and the five principle elements identified as such; all of these ideas were discussed in detail.

Importantly, it was noted that although useful to some extent, the term milestone had a 'linear' implication and that perhaps 'marker' might be more pertinent as it 'allows for spontaneity' (Cristina).

Each of the five principles listed as milestones at these interviews were expanded on in the following terms:

Length of time in the teaching profession: seen as of less importance - how long one had been practicing didn't necessarily indicate that the individual was reflective or enthusiastic (Cristina) - rather the **extent of experience, enabling them to meet needs and be imaginative** was more significant. Length of time had relevance only in terms of having **time to evolve as a teacher through a wide range of experiences** - good and bad - to gain a sense of professional identity.

Variety of posts held: carefully examined as a notion by this group. Importantly, the emphasis should be on **what you take away from these experiences**, rather than number or nature of posts held. FE teaching practice can limit opportunities for scholarly activity, and roles given can be in contrast to that of teacher educator, potentially detracting not enhancing a sense of professional identity. However, this can help avoid becoming 'settled' (Ruth) and that **experience of working in different teaching cultures helps professional growth.**

Involvement in curriculum development: seen as more problematic to identify, but best described as helpful through **experiences with more than one organisation and more than one course.**

Association with a range of organisations: required further discussion and examples, but once clarified it was felt that this **could be related to one's specialisation**¹⁸. Notably, there was limited awareness of what organisations this could refer to, or of professional organisations for teacher educators such as TEAN or TELL (see Section 1).

Extent of experience in/of teacher education: not seen essential to entering into the role, but **significant if seen in terms of managing adult learners** - an issue for both interviewees. However, one

¹⁸ From the four-fold model for teacher educators (Exley, 2010) - Appendix 8.

interviewee returned to this later in the interview and expanded on the idea, suggesting it was perhaps a question of what could be **demonstrated to show a dedication to teacher education**, through involvement in teaching and learning, extended roles in posts held, through professional development...; something this project aims to help support.

Aside from seeking ways to clarify the five elements, these were all seen as having some relevance, but it was also strongly suggested that conferencing was added to the list (Cristina). This was related to the need for professional dialogue which was felt to be better supported in university-based teacher education practices than in FE practice.

Following on from the principles, the term 'professional learning' and its relation to continuing professional development (CPD) was discussed. For both, CPD was the more familiar term and there was some discussion as to whether these terms were the same thing, or discernibly different. One suggestion was that professional learning might refer to the process of becoming a professional teacher, as a precursor. Both felt that CPD was directly related to professional practice and was an opportunity for reflection and investment in oneself as a teacher educator, for learning the language of teaching and could provide a theoretical framework for what is done in practice - but could, also, become a 'tick box' of strategies and actions taken. The link to participation in teaching and learning conferences was also brought up in relation to professional learning and CPD.

Moving onto the question of preferred approaches to participation in a *pathway* as proposed for this project, the overall discussion was around how complex it

can be balancing independent study with engagement with others. There were clear and different personal views based on learning preferences. For example, independent working was desirable, but nevertheless thought to benefit from meeting with others. A difficulty was foreseen that if only one person was in support this could be limiting and feel very 'personal' but, conversely, too many people was problematic for coordination and a complexity of views could be confusing. A disproportionate amount of time spent on collaboration is not always seen as productive. There were benefits seen in all of the approaches suggested in the question, but the main points were:

Communication with others should be an **opportunity, especially at the start of the journey**, for sharing ideas, feeling in-touch with a wider community and for a sense of collegiality, ... not an obligation.

... and that this **communication could be in a range of forms**, e.g. through an online community or social media (e.g. *Twitter, Facebook*), with a supervisor/supporter face-to-face, or in person at conferences. An opportunity linked to **the idea of networking**, with the **focus on professional dialogue**.

Although working **independently from peers** was a preferred approach, as some sort of supervision/support is intended for the *pathway* **working with only one other person should be avoided**, i.e. mostly as supervised **independent working, but with opportunities for meetings with groups and others**.

The final direct question was about using a portfolio to evidence or represent participation in a *pathway*. This was intended to provide an opportunity for interviewees to suggest ways in which they could imagine effective and appropriate ways to produce this material, as participants (Appendix 2). Making reference to their previous answers on preferred approaches to participation both suggested **electronic or digital formats including audio recordings**

and social media, which interviewees had already found to be supportive and helpful in building a personal confidence in their professional identity. The view was that these formats for recording reflections and ideas **provided a life-line**, and **helped to build a toolkit through feedback from others as well as through personal reflection**.

Although there had been initial hesitations about using social media and audio recordings for replay, once tried it was the equality of the feedback and chance to look in detail at particular features of practice, within what felt like a professional community, which proved effective. The **importance of this being professional discussion, and not counselling**, was noted; as new teacher educators it was the sharing of professional issues, links to resources and suggestions of other people to talk to beyond their immediate practice that was particularly valued. Bringing together the points raised by the interviewees, the overall feeling seemed to be that the opportunity to share **professional discussion in a 'safe environment' was felt to be most important** – virtual reality could also provide a way to **keep one's professional self 'alive' and be allowed to 'just breath!'** (Cristina, Ruth).

Although not posed as a question, the four-fold model of professionalism for teacher educators in FE practice was included on the interview question sheets (Appendix 4). This prompted a response referring back to points made about the first question regarding management of ourselves as teachers in practice, linked to being an *effective teacher in the LLS*. Two other elements, *being a*

teacher whose explicit subject specialist knowledge and understanding includes Education; and also a research were noted because of trying to manage to be 'one step ahead' of their students, which may also have related directly to the perspective of the interviewees, in this case, being new teacher educators.

Group 2. Experienced teacher educators in FE practice

The participants classified as 'experienced' teacher educators had all been in a teacher educator role in FE practices for over three years – the longest periods in role being over 20 years (footnote 5). They had worked variously in HE and FE settings and taught University-based awards such as the PGCE and Cert Ed, as had the new teacher educators, but they also had greater experience of teaching awarding body courses leading to teaching qualifications. The responses from this group were varied and often made reference to authors, theorists, texts and other practice-based resources relating to education theory, as well as drawing heavily on personal practice experiences which they spoke about with confidence. This was present in interviews with the new teacher educator interviewees, but this confidence with intertwining theory and practice was more noticeable with the experienced teacher educators. I believe that this harks back to the points previously made regarding the intertwining of our personal and professional selves (Section 2.c), which this teacher educator group may have developed through longer and more varied practice experiences (Beijaard, Verloop & Vermunt, 2000; Reeves, 2009). This group (Pandita, Daisy, Val, Karen) averaged similarly varied lengths of interview time to the new teacher educators, and overall the interviews varied between 40

minutes and 87 minutes, despite interviews being arranged for 60 minutes. As noted above, by handing the question sheet to interviewees, they were largely able to lead the pace and so were able to provide as much or as little of their time as they wanted around that initial arrangement.

At first sight, there is a contrast between the two groups, in terms of the analysis of the responses for each section, as more detail was offered by the experienced teacher educator group, but the differences in length of the summaries (cited above and below) must also take into account that there were twice the number of participants in this experienced teacher educator group. Having noted that there were some differences between the groups, I'd would, however, hesitate in over-emphasising the significance, as this categorisation of prospective, new and experienced teacher educators (Exley, 2010) could be regarded as an assumption on my part that these are identifiable categories, although this has been argued above (Brookfield, 1995; Eraut, 1994; Timperley, 2011) (Section 1).

For both groups, each interview started with an introductory explanation of the suggested procedure for the interview, and moved on to questions about the principles of the framework as outlined in this project. Initial responses were clear and direct, and this group more readily identified specific elements to prioritise alongside a rationale for their choices. This readiness to explain and articulate reasons for the choices made could have been due to a greater familiarity with the education language used in the questions, or because they

felt more confident in their own practice experiences and own professional identities. As with the new teacher educator group, although none of the list of characteristics and qualities were dismissed there were challenges and expansion of the ideas, as well as suggested additions:

Having good communication skills: particularly prioritised by half the group, but not discussed at length (Daisy, Karen). Appeared to be seen as a 'given'.

At least some knowledge of Education as a specialist subject: raised several points. Theoretical knowledge of Education was seen as an important specialist subject but was not felt to be common in FE, although it could be gathered as you went along; it was strongly felt that **theoretical knowledge of Education should include psychological and sociological aspects** - referencing Basil Bernstein, amongst others (Pandita, Karen, Val). The **mutual benefits of some knowledge of Education as a specialist subject** was noted, i.e. helping with one's own practice as well as when mentoring or supporting staff in any sort of teacher training - HE or awarding body. However, this should not be seen as a pre-requisite for the teacher educator role, but **something to be developed from the start, with some initial indication that an individual was open to this and willing to 'dive in'** (Daisy, Val and Karen).

Some management experience, skills and knowledge: questioned, challenged and expanded as an element. An example used on the interview question sheet (Advanced Teacher Practitioners - ATPs) was pointed out as **not necessarily being management related, but it was felt that this sort of additional role or responsibility would be useful**. Management experience and FE practices were seen as reflecting managerialism, and experience of course management might be more possible in an FE setting than an HE one; The usefulness of this element was that it **could be linked to mentoring and coaching** – looking back to the ATP role – or as **indicative of being able to deal with multiple tasks** within a role, such as meeting Key Performance Indicators, National Student Survey expectations and other quality measures (Daisy, Val, Karen).

Good interpersonal and intrapersonal skills: **identified as particularly important** by three interviewees (Daisy, Val, Karen). There was a

concern that management lacks insight into what is necessary as an effective teacher practitioner, with an emphasis on teacher *training* over teacher *education*. This is significant because the diversity of learner profiles, with a **wide range of differentiation needs, needs celebrating** and that **this could/should be achieved through modelling**, thereby linking this element to the next one - *diversity of teaching experience across levels, subjects and contexts* - and potentially combining them because the **diversity of practice experience both requires and develops interpersonal and intrapersonal skills...**

A diversity of teaching experience across levels, subjects and contexts: specifically noted by three interviewees (Pandita, Daisy, Val). It was noted as important **to recognise the extent of diversity within the FE sector**, and recognise the **breadth of practice experience within that range as well as cross-sector**: not just within organisations and practice sites. The suggestion was that FE needed to **continue to challenge the culture of 'get on with it'** and to more **consciously engage in gaining a broader understanding of diversity** – to think outside of the box. The problem seemed to be that dealing with diversity was sometimes presented as being viewed as formulaic - even 'blinkered' - rather than **diversity, equality and differentiation as being context-specific and requiring practitioners to be flexible with a willingness to challenge pre-conceptions**. As was noted by the new teacher educator group above, the age or length of service isn't most significant, more critically it is the accumulated **breadth of experiences** – especially in a sector where a practitioner could find themselves an English specialist teaching physics or a sports specialist teaching Business Studies. However, one interviewee agreed the importance of this element in terms of changing political and social expectations and drivers, but prioritised the final element over this one...

...a love of teaching and respect for students: variously prioritised as **paramount, or as a second layer of importance – as an underpinning** (Pandita, Daisy, Karen).

In terms of missing elements, or an expansion to the proposed ideas, three key areas of interest emerged. Firstly, half this group specifically added the need for **critical thinking, of plurality and openness**, linking back to the diversity in the sector and a willingness to question and challenge practices (Daisy, Val). This

point was particularly linked to the dangers of ITTE practitioners purposefully or inadvertently promoting the idea that trainee teachers should be aiming at achieving 'that one good lesson', because in a diverse, complex and extremely varied sector this was not felt to be an apposite goal. Secondly, the other half of the group particularly championed the **significance of professional identity** relating to the call to **challenge external perceptions of professionalism** in terms of standards, and to look to personal values and individual experience (Pandita, Karen). For example, this was described as the ability to 'jump subjects', which was seen as one of the flexibilities of working in FE settings: working cross-discipline and being able to step outside of one's primary subject area being a strength of teacher training and the generic nature of the FE sector. This was linked to the four-fold model included in the interview question sheet, notably in terms of one's own field as a subject specialism creating a tension resulting in a feeling of having 'split roles' – teacher and practitioner within one's own field (Appendix 4). Similarly, there was a link clearly made to the idea that as teacher educators, there was the possibility - as well as an expectation - of being able, and willing, to **research pedagogic practices as well as ones' own subject specialism**, also a part of the four-fold model.

As the interviews moved on to the notion of 'milestones', this term was questioned and explored more than the *characteristics and qualities*. This could be related to it being the second topic for discussion, and raised another assumption I had made using Brookfield's 'challenging assumptions' approach to analysing the data (1995, p.236): that all questions and topics would be

received by the interviewees equally, regardless of the place they were introduced into the interview process. With hindsight, and at this stage of an interpretative analysis of the findings as data, it does seem that a more general but still useful 'warm-up' question would have been better as a first topic, which could then be revisited in more depth with a follow-up question later on in the interview (Section 3).

As noted above, the term milestone was challenged on several points, by three of the four interviewees. For this group of experienced teacher educators, essentially the challenge was based on a feeling that they would prefer to be recognised as 'self-starting' and already engaged in collaborative activities, therefore not requiring too much direction or help in being guided along a *pathway* for recognition as a teacher educator. With hindsight, this could have been anticipated for this group; again, using this adapted version of Brookfield's model (Section 5) has identified an assumption made in the planning for the interviews, namely that experienced teacher educators would be happy with the same terms as new teacher educators when discussing and describing the processes involved.

It was felt by this group that using the term milestone suggested that it was necessarily something for everyone to achieve, but that as experienced teacher educators this could be quantified in some way, as it may already be a strength. This was, however, tempered by the suggestion that even if it was seen as a significant strength in an individual's professional practice, there could be

benefit in looking to further enhance that area. It was suggested that some sort of criteria would be useful so that even if everyone was expected to evidence reaching a milestone, the experience could be tailored to that person's journey. The emphasis was that participants in a *pathway* should be able to create a personalised, individual profile of reaching/or acknowledging these milestones, to avoid them becoming 'fixed'. It was also pointed out that as a set of milestones to be reached or achieved, they could simply become a list of specifications to be met – not usefully engaged with as shared, reflexive experiences. The term 'stepping stones', and 'next steps' were suggested, with the underlying idea being that these would be supporting and guiding where to tread – not the 'route to...' but the 'route via...'. In this way, they become the basis of a personal and individual profile that includes critical incidents (Tripp, 2011) and significant events particular to the participant (Pandita, Daisy, Val).

The five principles as milestones or markers as suggested for this framework were considered by this group in the following terms:

Length of time in the teaching profession: similarly to the new teacher educators, useful if seen in terms of **experiences rather than duration**. A rephrasing was suggested because experience of teaching can also be through observation and development in ways not necessarily identified by that person as engagement in 'professional' teaching.

Variety of posts held: expanded on to create what could, confidently, become an addition to the list of elements, see below. Overall, similar points made as before, highlighting that this element might refer to **related experiences rather than teaching posts or named roles** – focusing on the field of educational practices so that it **includes the many roles and responsibilities of practitioners, rather than emphasising job titles**. In this way, the 'variety' could **embrace a wide range of activities and accountabilities** afforded to educators, e.g.

external examining, sitting on committees and cross-boundaries within and between sectors and practices.

Involvement in curriculum development: given higher priority by the experienced teacher educator group than new teacher educators, as felt to have particular relevance, even describing it as **an ‘umbrella’ term and one that underpinned the other milestones**. This was due to it being seen as **critical that teacher educators, and teachers, gained insight in to the background to practice**.

Association with a range of organisations: again, prioritised more highly by this group than the new teacher educators. The **need for time to engage, and to engage with a wide range** associations and organisations was important. Some concern around a reliance on a particular approach to practice from, for example, a specific awarding body, and that teacher educators needed to be **seeking breadth and diversity to develop the quality of their practice**, and to **increase their appeal as being open to educational ideas**. One of the benefits was that practitioners would **gain insight into the different pressures and tensions in other practice settings** if able to engage with other institutions or professional bodies.

Extent of experience in/of teacher education: opened up through discussion about **whether this necessitated that experience had to be in teacher education**, particularly for early career teacher educators who may find difficulty in accessing practice experience. It was suggested that a **change of phrase might be useful to include related experiences**, or that *length of time in teaching and associations with a range of organisations* (elements above) could be identified as indicative of how people have experience of communicating with others.

In terms of changes to the milestones, the discussions were mostly focused on expanding the notion of the *extent of experience in/of teacher education*. This element was prioritised but with the proviso that it included observation of practices, which pre-service or prospective teachers might seek in order to build their interest and experiences *of* not just *in* practice. This was echoed in another interview as being problematic for people seeking ‘a foot in the door’ which may

not in itself be accessible, and that recognition of other experiences could be useful in showing an interest and commitment to engagement. It was suggested that involvement in CPD events and activities could be included as this is possibly more accessible to practitioners within practice settings, and that this also addresses the sharing of good practice and activities designed to support reflection 'on the act of teaching'.

This reflection on the act of teaching was significant for the experienced teacher educators as it suggested a move towards a more self-reflective stance. To support this process, networks and online communities were identified as possible factors to include in principle, as professional dialogue could continue after CPD events or activities. Learning theories were highlighted as something to include as these can support thorough interrogation of one's own practice and could create a dynamic, enabling informed questioning of practice. The emphasis seemed to be on encouraging practitioners and trainees to 'own' the process of development, to argue for their practice and to challenge it – to avoid any sense of 'getting away with it!'

Finally, it was suggested that the milestones could be augmented through relation to diversity and inclusion, of demonstrating an inclusive approach and engagement with students (Val, Karen). The emphasis here was on keeping a direct link between becoming/being a teacher educator and the students who are sharing that journey. This is a point that can be interpreted as being one of the assumptions that Brookfield (1995) warns about - an assumption of this

project that the emphasis is on the people/person becoming a teacher educator, and that the milestones examined at interview did not include any reference to experiences of engagement with students. For example, A review of how effectively this had been managed, or how long or how frequently this was part of a prospective, new or experienced teacher educator's journey so far could be included. This is something that could be related to the variety of student groups a participant in a *pathway* had encountered, or the diversity of student need that had been met in their practice. The process of asking interviewees to consider the current framework enabled this important point to be raised – the issue that none of the proposed milestones addressed dealing with the student body and the expectations and values around equality, diversity or inclusive practice, a point that had also been raised in regard to the characteristics and qualities (Karen, Val).

Similarly to the new teacher educators, the term professional learning was associated quite closely with CPD, with all participants being hesitant regarding their definitions and implications, although as the discussion progressed confidence in responses grew as they aired ideas and reflected. To start with, it was tentatively suggested that professional learning might be an initial learning journey, and possibly focusing on day-to-day, less formal learning at times when one is actually in the act of being the professional. One suggestion was that professional learning occurred at the point of starting to take on the role, of 'becoming...', when practitioners were at the stage of demonstrating through measured outcomes and targets that they were more than just 'in practice' –

able to show that they were also 'professional'. Whilst talking through their ideas, interviewees also brought together their thoughts on professional learning in the form of training or courses, and linked professional learning to meeting professional standards and the practicalities of practice being central. However, the concern was raised that even notions of professional values, knowledge and practice can become a checklist if treated as things to be 'achieved' through performance and evidenced as product.

Through the interview process, questions were raised as to whether professional learning might be related to developing one's own practice in context, consciously and purposefully, or whether it was tacit - happening without the practitioner being fully aware. Professional learning was also linked to having a duty of care and listening to student voices, and looking at the relationship between *learning* and *development*. As discussions developed, ideas expanded and grew away from solely legislative requirements of professional development or post-graduate qualifications, towards a deeper role for learning as an engagement with experiential learning. Professional learning became described as being able to complete the circle of formal learning and practice which could actually happen sooner *or* later in one's practice, although the overall sense was that professional learning came earlier, and CPD was longer term.

It was noted that flexibility and cost play a key role in a sector where journeys into teaching and into teacher education are diverse, practitioners initially come

from a wide range of subjects and go on to have varied engagement, such as part-time or full-time employment, or as distance and blended learning tutors. Due to the variety, it was felt that something which helps bring people and ideas together, and to create a shared understanding of a professional identity, was the opportunity to study the history of Education. Studying teaching and learning as History gave a contextualisation of practice, of what and how teaching has developed, and a political perspective. As interviewees talked through their ideas, it was suggested that professional learning could be useful in challenging and clarifying concepts of our professional selves. It was also made clear that the experience of professional learning should be shared with experienced practitioners, as collegiate learning about the role of both teacher and teacher educator. It was identified that effectiveness would come where as co-constructed and collaborative, as 'learning on the job'. In this way, *professional learning* was summed up as being '*learning about your profession*' - the professionalism of the job that you do (Pandita, Daisy, Val, Karen). It was highlighted that the relation between theory and practice was particularly important; being able to relate practice and map it to theory, but also to be able to inform practice through theoretical ideas, was crucial.

When moving on to definitions and descriptions of CPD, this was more confidently tackled, and felt to be what came after whatever professional learning might bring. For CPD, terms like 'tick box', 'regular', 'general', 'training', 'on-going', 'improvement' and 'mandatory' were used. Although it was recognised as important that matters such as health & safety, and reminders

about practical matters, CPD was seen as having become, almost, discredited due to repeated less-than-positive-experiences, and a tendency towards being instructional over developmental. Mostly, this seemed to be due to the approach taken at CPD events, and that a change of language towards more open learning opportunities - rather than compliance - would help with these perceptions (Pandita ,Daisy, Val).

Concerns with language and terminology featured several times in responses, and was identified as bringing practitioners to the point of 'self-flagellation'. There were concerns that the perception was being imposed of professionalism as predicated on compliance, and that professional development was only linked to teacher improvement, with the assumption that current practices (and practitioners) were therefore, by default, not good enough. In this way, the interviews moved towards ideas that CPD had its role, but that professional learning could be wider, include informal learning and needed to be recognised. For example, professional learning could be captured, as CPD already is, through appraisals or recording and using critical incidents which were then reflected on (Tripp, 2011).

The next stage in the interview process was to consider people's preferred approach to engagement as participants in a professional *pathway*. The emphasis in the responses from this group of interviews was in contrast to the new teacher educators who had identified a preference for independent working

- albeit with some form of supervision or support, possibly with groups. The experienced teacher educators interviewed all selected:

Working co-constructively with peers and those supervising/in support as a first choice, with two interviewees adding that collaboratively with peers was also a preference, but only as long as this, too, was with some sort of supervision (Appendix 2, Q.4).

There was a sense that all the options suggested were useful, but working co-constructively was particularly important. The reasons cited were, firstly, having the opportunity for engagement with a process of 'being' and 'doing'; whether prospective, new or experienced teacher educators, co-construction was more likely to lead to good quality teacher education, resulting in a shared understanding of professional identities. Secondly, the ability to have an impact on the framework itself and gain understanding of how processes take shape in the real world, of the potential for influence and to shape, and recognition of ownership, responsibility, interest and engagement. Critically, it was noted that this approach can be time consuming and individually challenging, and that the timeframe would need to be considered. There are practical difficulties with arranging collaborative or co-constructive working opportunities, if not undertaking a *pathway* independently, as well as potential problems with relationships – which can be very varied.

As participants would be at different stages in their professional learning journeys, coaching, mentoring, or taking shorter courses such as PTLLS (Appendix 8), could be made use of as part of the process and peers could work together who were at different stages in their own journey. There were seen to be benefits to this approach, although it was noted that it would require

being explicit and open in order to really share experiences and journeys. This notion was supported by interviewees, who made the critical point that reflection can be collegiate, not just a lone action, and that this improves the quality and depth of investigation into one's own practice, 'augmenting understanding' through an 'immersive experience', and through 'grafting with others' (Pandita, Karen).

Possibly due to this being a group of experienced teacher educators, it was mentioned again that participants could be seen as 'self-starters', already engaged with informal learning, familiar with examples and ready for discussions when engaged in a *pathway*. And the contrast was made between any CPD approach which emphasises improvement, thereby inviting a reading of this as having been predicated on a deficient model, with one of a professional willingness and capacity for reflection and reflexive engagement. There was a concern that any drive for continuing professional development seems to come with the expectation that practitioners need to be reminded to improve, rather than being recognised as professionals ready to analyse practice, engage in a discursive and dialogic celebration of good practice, resulting in praxis. Interviewees cited experiences where teachers and teacher educators had worked collaboratively and professionally in order to get to grips with changes in training and professional development models, had created dynamic and collaborative spaces in order to brainstorm ideas, discuss implications, 'thrashing out ideas' and creating an 'environment of possibility' (Pandita, Val). At this point, the links to having a sound knowledge from an historical perspective was brought back into the discussion, and that any

training should include philosophy, history, psychology and sociology – to build on professional development as professional learning, developing theorised practice.

Discussion with these experienced teacher educators was lively and discursive, framed only by the process as semi-structured interviews. Responses were reflexive, each engaged in the process of reflecting on the ideas as proposed, and even noting, from time to time, how this was also a journey of sorts for them – ‘It’s, it’s making me think...’, ‘you’re certainly making me think here...’, ‘I’m thinking about diversity and inclusion and things like that because, because now, because you’ve broadened it...’, ‘It’s quite interesting actually, it’s made me think, more than I was going to think today!’ and that ideas were ‘sort of jumping out at me’ (Pandita, Daisy, Val, Karen). The process, although done as separate interviews, did begin to feel to me as the interviewer like a wider discussion and dialogue about practice and possibilities – it felt collegiate and constructive, mainly because it was also analytical, reflexive and challenging.

When examining the idea of a *pathway* being recognised, perhaps through the creation of a portfolio, the investigative examination of ideas by interviewees continued... and previously mentioned areas of interest re-emerged as part of this discussion on how to evidence a *pathway*. A portfolio format was seen as a place for self-reflection, to record teaching and patterns emerging in practice through written pieces, through blogging, photos and images. It was viewed as a place to support the development of practice and for self-assessment. Other interviewees pointed out that the use of journals, or reflective learning journals,

can provide effective opportunities but that there is an associated challenge of walking the line between a personal account and writing for an audience, possibly resulting in a level of falsity, and inconsistency. This was linked back to working with students, in ITTE or in CPD, where there was a concern that writing was seen as the only authenticated end product, valorised over other formats by teacher education programmes.

A portfolio, or *patchwork text*, approach could be a way to help recognise the significance of practice. There were concerns about having to become part of the 'academy', represented by an emphasis on producing formal essays whether on ITTE courses, as CPD or as professional learning approaches for students, as well as for teacher educators themselves. Through participation in a *pathway* involving portfolio working such as the HEA fellowship preparation route (Canterbury Christ Church University, N.D.; Higher Education Academy, 2015b), and other alternative formats, teacher educators would be keeping themselves connected to a variety of formats and practices that support learning. Even planning and preparing for engagement in a formal process of membership, or as professional development, becomes part of one's professional learning journey and keeps a link to the processes and journeys of our students (Pandita, Val).

It was similarly noted that critical incidents (Tripp, 2011) could be recorded and reflexively engaged with through a portfolio format. The need to be adaptable to an individual's experience of events, such as critical incidents or emergent

practice, was seen as a reason to make use of portfolio working as an alternative format, particularly if assignments were to be part of the format of the *pathway* (Section 6). Having a place to be able to focus on writing about the sector through researching, reading and investigation had been helpful in discovering principles that underpinned practice. The engagement with research was cited as ‘inspiring’, and as important as being in practice, leading to some discussion on Richardson and St.Pierre’s notions of writing as a method of enquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) – not simply fact-finding, but as a process in itself so that the purpose and route for a journey of discovery could be adapted and negotiated.

The possible inclusion of images in a travelogue created as part of participation in a *pathway* was seen as important, including images of groups and activities. This idea was supported from practice experience, where it had been used for ITTE with first and third year students for recording and practice-based reflection. The combination of text and images, as items which could be posted as shared resources through platforms like blogs, was particularly mentioned as this could not only support collegiate practices, but also provided an ‘internal and external record of practice’. In turn this was then useful as both a practitioner and as a researcher, supporting the notion of the practitioner as researcher and keeping research integral to practice. Audio, video and on-line materials were noted by three interviewees from this group – each being cited as useful in providing ‘genuine’ evidence, authentic and useful when shared, or being used as self or peer assessment. But these formats were also seen as

being useful because they can provide opportunities for process, co-construction of knowledge and understandings, for summarising and negotiating possible ideas to take back into practice (Pandita, Val, Karen). Having some sort of framework was suggested, involving an initial audit, then working with a nominated peer to discuss and create portfolio clips, video, gather evidential materials. It could then be 'defended', as in a *viva voce*, instead of the portfolio of a *pathway* being assessed as a product, avoiding an over-simplistic putting together of an end product. This way, if marking or assessment were needed, the whole process would be one of professional dialogue and also included in the portfolio creating an on-going process, again keeping a link to the processes and journeys of students (Pandita, Val).

As with the interviews with new teacher educators, the interview question sheets included the four-fold model of professionalism for teacher educators in FE practice (Appendix 4). Two of the four interviewees stated that they felt they had lost their original subject specialism, but also linked it to the FE sector overall and the expectation that practitioners are likely to teach across subjects and in areas that were not their original area of specialisation (Pandita, Daisy). The inclusion of research as part of teacher educator professionalism was also highlighted, with the emphasis being on research into and about practice, rather than an author of papers in academic journals. Overall, the four-fold model was seen as a way to gain a sense of solidarity with colleagues as teacher educators when this can feel very isolated as practice (Val, Karen).

Towards the end of the interviews, there were also some interesting additional observations made by interviewees from this group. For example, it was noted that a co-constructive approach means that each person has to bring something to that process and participate in it as a shared act and not something done or presented in isolation. It was also re-emphasised that teachers are researchers, and this needed to be recognised by ourselves as teachers. The importance of being able to relate theory to practice was raised, and achieving a balance between knowledge and action was reiterated. It was suggested that the experience of dealing with a diversity of students, and student need, should be included in the principles and, finally, the importance was noted of teacher educators being able to guide and support ITTE or CPD students to gain an understanding that 'standards are caught - not taught' (Pandita, Daisy, Val, Karen).

c. [Sharing of the experience with professional colleagues and peers during the journey, and also on return – supervisors, examiners and researchers in related areas](#)

As a 'perspective on travelling' (Section 5), the sharing of this experience with professional colleagues and peers has been thought-provoking and uplifting. This third perspective, an adaptation based on Brookfield's model (1995) to aid us in challenging our assumptions about practice, is seen as one that has the potential to be more deeply entwined with the experience of participation in a *pathway* than is possible for me at this stage, given the demands of this project as part of my doctoral studies. The professional colleagues I'm currently able to share this project with are limited, to some degree, by the nature of these

studies. However, over time I would anticipate that through conferences, publications, instigation of a pilot for people to undertake a professional *pathway* and so on, that there would emerge a broader dialogue about the framework and a wider sharing of the ideas and experiences that engagement in a *pathway* could provide.

Despite that possible limitation, having supervisors and being able to present aspects of this project at conferences has been invaluable. Analysing the findings from this project so far, and having the opportunity to challenge assumptions made in its planning and execution have also helped. What has been highlighted for me is that sharing the journey of this project with senior colleagues and peers has been vital as part of a process of challenge and development. I've benefited from being able to share this project with a director of studies (lead supervisor) and a second supervisor, and a professional colleague from within the University as part of an interim *viva voce* before being able to embark on the final stage of the doctorate. This small group have been able to share the journey as it has developed and whilst I have been travelling. What will come next will be a sharing of the journey with an unknown audience – when it is shared with examiners at a *viva voce*. This, too, will be a huge opportunity to test assumptions albeit within a power-influenced and hegemonic framework as identified in Brookfield's original illustration of his 'lenses' model (1995, p.30) .

At this point, by using the adapted version of Brookfield's model, sharing this project as a journey with others and, in part, through scholarly activities, I have been able to discuss and evaluate the proposed framework for a professional *pathway* as it progresses. Ideally, this will continue past the *viva voce*, hopefully, into future sharing and evaluating the proposed ideas in a long-running process of analysis and assumption-hunting to help strengthen it as a model. As an example of this, at the interim *viva voce* not only did I review the figurative language prior to that event, but through that meeting it was also noted how important it was going to be to find a format that would help explain the framework and how it might be engaged with by participants. Without this clear exposition of the notion of the professional *pathway*, it would remain something only sensible to me, as the creator, and to those I had spent a disproportionate amount of time explaining and describing the project to.

Another group that I am including in this adaptation of Brookfield's model are researchers in related areas. The significance of this in hunting for assumptions amongst the findings was a danger that the project would take at face-value the generally observed position that teacher education in FE is an under-researched area of practice (Section 1) (Crawley, 2016; Eliahoo, 2016). However, through discussion at interviews, through conferencing and through the literature review (Sections 2 and 5.d), it became clear to me that it can be an error to focus too closely on one area of research, and that by looking at associated areas much can be learned that can contribute to enhancing practice and developing professional identity. For example, Crawley (2013;

2015; 2016) and Eliahoo (2016) have researched and produced work that has proven invaluable when developing this project (Section 2.h).

Other considerations, viewed from the perspective of a shared experience with professional colleagues and peers, have been that in addition to authored papers and projects resulting from such contemporary researches there have been signs of research projects emerging in other areas designed to support ITTE development by teacher educators as supporting practitioners. For example, the Initial Teacher Education Enhancement Programme (Education and Training Foundation, 2017) has been offering short courses in Bristol and Tiverton from March to June 2017. This four-day programme includes outcomes designed to help practitioners improve their 'capacity to facilitate high quality, sector relevant, Initial Teaching Training' (Education and Training Foundation, 2017, p.online). The outcomes for this course state that:

You will have the knowledge and confidence to:

- be an effective teacher of Initial Teacher Training in the evolving FE and Skills sector
- effectively motivate trainees to engage with and apply the Professional Standards within their practice, beyond just competence and compliance
- confidently use the best strategies for teaching trainees, including how to make learning the programme high value, relevant and enjoyable
- address the contemporary issues, priorities and themes in order for trainers to provide relevant and expansive professional learning
- use data effectively to track and support learner progress
- effectively support the progression of your trainees
- develop your trainees' understanding of how to integrate employability skill development in classroom teaching and learning, to include English and STEM skills
- enhance flexible learning through technology

- build capacity for quality improvement in Initial Teacher Training provision through action research.
(*ibid.*, online)

The webpage indicates that there is an emphasis on practical application and skills and that ‘applicants should be teaching or directly contributing to the delivery of Further Education initial teacher training qualifications’, noting that ‘If you are a prospective teacher trainer please contact us for discussion’ (*ibid.*). As the course as described is a comparatively new contribution to this field of practice it is yet to be tested, but as an initial observation it does look as if it would be the sort of programme that a new or experienced teacher educator could include in an *itinerarium*, perhaps using it to support their engagement with a *pathway* and when exploring the principles of the framework (Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013).

There have also been a series of Teacher Educator workshops run in association with TEAN, including workshops run at their conferences, since 2007. These have been led by Peter Boyd, and offer a series of three linked sessions that ‘have provided an element of academic induction for more than 400 colleagues who are in their first year or two of appointment to new roles as Teacher Educators based in higher education, colleges and schools’ (University of Cumbria/TEAN, 2017). These workshops are designed to ‘address the challenges of professional identity, workplace context, pedagogy, and research activity for Teacher Educators’ (*ibid.*, online). Again, this is an activity that could

very usefully become part of an *itinerarium*, designed by a new teacher educator to support their journeying ever more deeply into professionalism...

Both of these projects indicate that this is a more active research area than at first glance, although I agree with the overall premise that, nevertheless, this field of practice remains largely unexplored territory.

- d. Exploring associated literature and theoretical knowledge to help provide context - of the terrain, its history, geography and of previous journeying for planning and during the trip

To a large extent, the findings here are related to the literature review (Section 2), but as a presentation and analysis of the findings, it is worthwhile to reflect on what was unearthed during this part of the journey. For example, without engaging with the literature review as a process I may not have come across Brady's (1999) work on vicarious travel and his ideas on the usefulness of the travelogue in improving the richness of the experience for his geography students. But the significance of the literature isn't confined to a review.

Through reading and exploring new areas and avenues I was able to examine the nature of journeying that is being suggested through this project as being akin to the 'Grand Tour' (Section 3), and to consider figurative approaches such as the *itinerarium* (Sections 3, 4.b) that may help participants to make use of the framework.

To some degree, as the researcher, I came at this project with assumptions that the language I was using and the ideas themselves would be sensible, or 'common-sensical', enough for the reader to understand the intentions and meanings within the project (Wenger, 1998, p.47). But through reading and examining the context around the themes and principles for this framework, and the design for a professional *pathway*, I have been able to re-vision the figurative ideas and terminology. Hopefully, the result is a clearer model that will prove to have some impact in this field of practice and on the debates associated with professional learning in a more general sense.

I would hope that, alongside current research, projects and courses (Section 5.c), this project will contribute to a developing dialogue between participants, researchers, practitioners, learners and students of teaching, and that all of their voices can be added to the body of literature and theoretical knowledge that underpins practice experience.

6. Discussion of findings: what has been learned about the terrain, the transport, and the travellers?

So, what do the findings have to say about the original vision for a professional *pathway* for teacher educators in FE practice as a framework to support professional learning? This section will consider the implications as a critically reflexive investigation looking at the implications of the findings by retracing the path of the original framework and principles, as well as the four-fold model for professional teacher educator (Appendix 8).

The original model of professionalism and the underpinning principles for a framework for professional *pathways* for teacher educators in FE practice grew from personal experience and a growing theoretical understanding of current practices (Exley, 2010; Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013) (Section 1 and Appendix 2). Travels through this project has been driven by two main impulses. The first driver was a perception of the need to discover a way to enhance development of a shared and recognised professional identity for teacher educators in FE practice. The second motivation was my own 'call to adventure' (Campbell, 1949) prompted by my concern that without a path to follow I was losing my identity as a practitioner. This feeling was, and is, largely based on a sense of losing touch with the specialisms I started with on this journey as a teacher educator, without having anything substantive in their place (Section 1).

By bringing together the findings from the two forms of data collection contributing to this project (Section 3) the opportunity now arises to review the proposed principles-based professional *pathway*, retracing its steps and revising the framework for engagement and to explore the possibilities for re-visioning the principles of the original model.

Throughout this project nothing has indicated that the proposal for a framework to support professional learning as a *pathway* for teacher educators in FE practice is a misplaced idea. The overwhelming response from participants, through my own engagement and from material found through the literature review has been encouraging and suggests that, although there is some territory that needs to be revisited and reviewed, the notion is a sound one. In this section the implications resulting from the data collection and interpretation of the findings of the project will be examined and the overall framework revised using this information. The six sites to be revisited and reviewed are: *characteristics and qualities*; milestones; professional learning; *itinerarium*; travelogue and portfolio-working; four-fold model.

Appendix 5 states the original principles and definitions which have been critically and reflexively engaged with through this project; by using the findings above, these and the framework as a whole can now be revisited, reviewed and re-visioned. Appendix 6 shows the possible remapping of the original framework based on a critically reflexive interpretation of the findings. Consideration of next

steps and further developments will be examined in the final section of this thesis, Section 7.

a. Characteristics and qualities

The six *characteristics and qualities* (Appendix 5) had been previously arrived at through research that included a focus group and an email questionnaire (Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013). The results of that research have been revisited and challenged by interviewing different sets of practitioners as well as a more extensive literature review and the inclusion of auto-ethnographic engagement. Through this process several key points have arisen which have helped to strengthen the focus of the principles as originally suggested, but also identified aspects that have emerged or need revision. The following is a summary of the conclusions derived from the data researched and reviewed as the *characteristics and qualities* in this project. They appear in their revised form in Appendix 6.

Having good communication skills is widely accepted as a suitable and necessary quality for a practitioner, to be prioritised, although new teacher educators suggested expanding it to specify that this includes e-communication. *At least some knowledge of Education as a specialist subject* is essential, but should embrace practice-based *and* theoretical knowledge – this idea was further developed in that it should include psychological and sociological aspects of theorised practice. However, knowledge of Education as a specialist

subject should not be seen as a pre-requisite, but rather something to be developed but with some initial indication that an individual was open to developing a theoretical position – being able to demonstrate a willingness to engage in gaining both practice-based and theoretical knowledge. *Some management experience, skills and knowledge (e.g. having been an Advanced Teacher Practitioner, or a course manager)* was questioned and discussed in detail, with the emphasis being that this should relate to experiences of management with adults and of ourselves as professional practitioners, rather than simply quality management or operational issues. Professional *characteristics and qualities* may not necessarily be seen as ‘management’ related, but experience of roles with additional responsibility for people-management is as important as operational management experience. *Good interpersonal and intrapersonal skills* were linked directly with the next characteristic, a *diversity of teaching experience across levels, subjects, or contexts*; these should be cross-sector, and definitely not confined to FE practice because diversity and breadth of practice experience both requires and develops interpersonal and intrapersonal skills.

This combination of skills and experience is deeply significant, especially given the diversity in learner profiles to be recognised and celebrated in the sector and beyond. A wide range of differentiation needs can be communicated through modelling, not just through telling, and this also highlights the desire for an emphasis on teacher *education*, rather than teacher *training*. Effective engagement with diversity, equality and differentiation requires that practitioners

be flexible, with a willingness to challenge pre-conceptions, providing further demonstration of *good interpersonal and intrapersonal skills*. *A love of teaching and respect for students* is essential – underpinning everything else.

There were three key additions to the original characteristic and qualities. These were:

Having resilience as a professional practitioner: because working with adults is as challenging (and rewarding) as teaching with any other group. Just because students are enrolled on a course as professional learning or professional development, there will still be issues relating to behaviour management and people will still have worries, needs and expectations, needing support as they deal with balancing the responsibilities of their own journeys as learners.

Critical thinking, and a willingness to question and challenge practices: to engage with cross-disciplinary practices, particularly linking this idea to the promotion of a reflexive and adaptable approach to practice because of the diversity, complexity and variety within the sector. This second addition to the *characteristics and qualities* extends to include recognition that part of a teacher educator's professional identity relates to being willing and able to challenge external perceptions of professionalism in terms of standards, and to look to personal values and individual experience. This includes seeing the opportunities to work across disciplines, and be responsive to practices and

fields of knowledge outside of one's own primary specialism, as being a strength of teacher education practice and the generic nature of the FE sector.

And finally, as teacher educators, this group identified that there is an expectation of *a willingness and readiness to research pedagogic practices as well as ones' own subject specialism*.

From my experience through auto-ethnographic engagement with an *itinerarium* and the beginnings of the travelogue, and in relation to the literature reviewed as part of this project, one of the constants has been in referring to these elements as *characteristics and qualities*. These principles also appear to be 'common-sensical' (Wenger, 1998, p.47) in terms of being relevant to the traveller, journeying into or around teacher education in the FE sector, in that they are aspects of ourselves that we would be expected to look out for, record and respond to along the way. This helps to create a dialogue between the participant and the terrain that they are journeying through, giving the participant aspects of themselves to be alert to, whilst travelling, when making use of *stopping points* or arriving at various *places of interest*, guided by the framework. Awareness of particular *characteristics and qualities* can be represented by a range of 'evidence' – a personal account. The selection of materials brought back from a visit, reflections on the impact that a visit may have had that can be acted upon in future practice, and so on, are all included in the travelogue and shared with others collaboratively, or even co-constructively.

b. Milestones

There was some concern over the term 'milestone' as implying a linear and inflexible approach, and so a revision is required. 'Marker' was suggested as being more open to spontaneity, which links to the notion of practitioners wanting to be recognised as 'self-starters', professional people who can plan and prepare their own learning journeys and not needing to be led along a route which they haven't contributed to themselves. The terms 'stepping stones' and 'next steps' were also suggested as sounding more supportive and guiding rather than instructing, but these still had an air of fixity about them, and of being less adaptable or responsive to personal experiences and individual critical incidents (Tripp, 2011), for example.

Overall, having to record that a milestone had been reached did not seem to meet expectations of the journey as being a personal one, especially if this was already something that the traveller was familiar with or felt was as strength of their practice. However, it was recognised that there is value in the elements themselves, and that even familiar places can be returned to, as TS Eliot declared in 1942:

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
(Fecit, 2000, p.online)

Therefore, each milestone might be included in an *itinerarium* as a specified site or an interesting place, but not necessarily as a first time event but perhaps as somewhere to return to. In this instance it might involve a retracing of previous

steps, where the purpose of the visit would likely be different to that of a first-time visitor. Creating some criteria to help frame this eventually was suggested, but in order to keep the framework from becoming any more complicated, this has been put to one side. Instead, for the purposes of this project, the term *specified site* was considered – to allow for the fact that it was an intentional inclusion in any *itinerarium*. However, when considering the auto-ethnographic experience of creating a travelogue as a wiki, and looking through charts and maps, another term – *place of interest* – emerged. Looking back at Brady's paper, he notes that by requiring his students to consider the detail of the region or place they were researching, such as having to construct cross-sectional diagrams in order to understand the elevation in relation to farming. Brady suggests that this activity 'ensures that student narratives are more than just sequential listings of points of interest' – exactly the aim here (Brady, 1999, p.80). So, in addition to identifying some *places of interest*, asking that they are also mapped to individual *characteristics and qualities* and the four-fold model, should result in what Brady observed: that having to think the process through 'slows students down and makes them consider the region' (*ibid.*). This change in terminology, from milestone to *place of interest*, allows that although these are recommended as being of interest as a site to visit, perhaps for a specified reason, additional places might come to light as the traveller follows and discovers their own *pathway*. This term also helps to minimise the general sense of being told where to travel and reopens the possibilities of greater autonomy in planning and preparing *for the journey*, as well as for changing direction and destination *whilst travelling*. The following is a summary of how

the *milestones* have been reconsidered in the light of the findings. They appear in their revised form as *places of interest* in Appendix 6.

Length of time in the teaching profession was challenged as a principle and the preference was clear for this to be about breadth of experience and impact rather than duration. What should be championed is the way in which practice-related experiences are used to develop oneself professionally and imaginatively, leading to more creative practice. This means that experience of 'good' professional teaching practice is not the only experience that matters. Observation of others, engagement with alternative approaches, taking courses, and 'bad' experiences can all contribute positively as milestones, or emerge as *places of interest* contributing to the development of one's professional identity. Turning to the *variety of posts held*, these too, should emphasise that it is what you take away from these roles and responsibilities that is significant, rather than the number, title or nature of posts held.

There is a concern that the FE sector has an expectation that holding a variety of posts can actually include many different roles and responsibilities, some of which may be in tension with the role of a teacher educator - thereby diluting a sense of professional identity. However, the benefit of a complexity of roles and responsibilities is that, professionally, a practitioner is less likely to become fixed or settled in a particular culture of working. This is helpful for professional growth and allows for a wide-range of possible experiences including external examining, sitting on committees, and engagement with professional bodies,

crossing between sectors and disciplines and so on. When considering *involvement in curriculum development*, which can be difficult to define, this is possibly best described as having experience with more than one organisation and more than one course. This is given high priority as a particular milestone or *place of interest*, as it could be seen as providing the underpinnings to practice, through opportunities to gain insight into how programmes and organisations function. In particular it can be useful in understating operational aspects of how departments meet the expectations of external bodies, for example, as well as specialist pedagogical practices that are embedded in the curricular experience.

Association with a range of organisations was interesting as an idea as it became clear that not all interviewees had formed a view of what organisations this might refer to. However, links were made to specialist organisations and professional bodies, and to some strongly held beliefs that engagement with others through conferencing, secondments, changes in employer are vital for professional development. Professional dialogue was identified as one of the key features supporting practitioners in maintaining awareness of the variety in the FE sector, and it is important for teacher educators to be seen to be appreciative of the diversity of practices. This can be achieved to some extent through experience with a range of awarding bodies, through conferencing, through online communities and networks with a professional focus, engagement with other sectors and alternative practices. There is huge benefit to practitioners in being able to increasingly appear as being open to new and

unusual practice contexts, and for them to understand the pressures and tensions in different settings. As an echo of the *characteristics and qualities* noted above, the *extent of experience in/of teacher education* was not seen as being an essential to entering into the role, because this can be difficult to obtain. However, if seen in terms of some experience of programmes that have included adult learners, and in terms of being able to show a dedication to teacher education as a field of practice with some understanding and theoretical knowledge of teacher education practices, learning theories and so on, then this becomes more accessible. This could be evidenced and built on through involvement in teaching and learning development, through observation of others, sharing good practice, self-reflection, extended support roles within posts held - all seen as ways to 'get a foot in the door'.

An additional milestone, or *place of interest* to visit, emerged as the demonstration of an inclusive approach, and some understanding and knowledge of student diversity, equality and difference. As noted above, the emphasis is on keeping a direct link between becoming/being a teacher educator and the students who are sharing that journey.

The suggested changes to the original milestones are not as obvious as for the *characteristics and qualities*, but the triangulation of interviews, auto-ethnographic engagement and reading of available literature has enabled a clearer vision of how these can be seen as features of the landscape, as *places of interest* to visit. The result is a 'must see' itinerary which is then built into a personal and individualised *itinerarium*.

c. Professional learning

Largely, the development of ideas on professional learning have come from a deeper investigation through the literature review (Section 2.f). Through that process, two key texts (Philpott, 2014; Timperley, 2011), came to underpin the position that this project seeks to promote, that a professional *pathway* could provide a process for professional learning, within which other CPD activities would have a role to play. For participants in a *pathway* to have a sound grasp of the framework and its ontological position, an understanding of the term 'professional learning' as used by these authors is very helpful. Therefore, I would go as far as to suggest that until participants had journeyed far enough to feel confident in their own interpretation of this term, I'd recommend readings from these texts, amongst others, as part of a suggested reading list to be used in the early stages of developing the *itinerarium* and travelogue. I'd particular hope for participants, whether prospective, new or experienced practitioners, to feel confident in the notion that professional learning is understood to be a process of *supporting professional practice* - throughout the professional life of the teacher educator, not solely a *preparation for* professional practice. Interestingly, the final point that Section 2.f draws from Timperley's text - the significance of teachers being able to make the link between *any* form of professional development or professional learning and their learners - was also highlighted in the interviews with experienced teacher educators. From this group (Section 5.b, Group 2.) it was clearly noted that there is a need to maintain a link to the journeys of our students.

Although the interviews suggest that CPD is currently a more familiar term for practitioners, it was useful to hear the interviewees' ideas on how to define and differentiate between this and professional learning. Overall, there was no discernibly consistent definition or shared understanding. Because of this, the importance of helping participants prepare through a supported process of devising an *itinerarium* becomes clearer. This might include some preparative reading or discussion to address the terminology used, and possibly the identification of a personal theoretical framework for participation in a *pathway*. Interviewees linked professional learning to meeting professional standards and to the practicalities of practice, but also raised a concern that values, knowledge and practice can become a performative checklist unless there is a clear understanding and confidence that participation is collegiate and possibly co-constructive in its intention. Findings from the interviews suggest that participants are happy to develop their ideas on professional learning from this more instrumental stance towards an understanding of a deeper role for professional learning. Findings also suggested that participation in a *pathway* would, as suggested in the original framework, benefit from being accompanied by a supervisor or mentor-guide to support that process.

If a reading list were to be offered, it would be designed to be developed co-constructively, with participants able to share and acknowledge reading and resources with each other. Alongside reading on professional learning, interviewees suggested that there might be texts on the history, psychology and sociological aspects of Education, as well as on reflective practice, the uses for

critical incident analysis and on writing as a method of enquiry; all of these offer routes for learning about teacher education as a professional practice.

d. Itinerarium

As already mentioned in this section, the role of the *itinerarium* begins to play a significant role in a professional *pathway*. It is not only essential to the preparations and planning by the participant, it also contributes to the process of individualisation and ownership of the journey. What is emerging is that it is also crucial in terms of setting the theoretical framework that will underpin participation, and is actually part of the travelogue, not just the first step.

Taking into consideration the findings above, a revised version of the *itinerarium* in Appendix 1 is offered in Appendix 7. The language of the *itinerarium* identifies with the figurative notion of a journey, with *pathways*, entering and crossing terrain, and of travelling and journeying (Section 5). This notation was not addressed in detail at the interviews, but through my auto-ethnographic engagement through a wiki I did find that the language was difficult to distinguish at times, in that the features, characteristics, milestones and so on, all needed to be more clearly defined in order to avoid overlap and confusion. Through the process of presenting and analysing the findings the resultant revised *itinerarium* information sheet and framework (Appendices 6 and 7) does seem clearer and potentially makes creating a wiki travelogue less cumbersome. Without the literature review it is unlikely that I would have come across Brady's (1999) work on vicarious travel and his ideas on the usefulness

of the travelogue, or understood the forms of travel such as the 'Grand Tour' (Section 3), which have proven so helpful in this project (Sections 3, 4.b).

It is also noteworthy, that through this research existent course and programmes have been identified such as the Award in Education and Training, the Initial Teacher Training Enhancement Programme (Education and Training Foundation, 2017), and the Teacher Educator workshops (Section 5.c). These are all possible *places of interest* or *stopping points* that participants may wish to include in their *itinerarium*.

e. Travelogue and portfolio working

Although the travelogue wasn't discussed in detail at interviews, this was explored through auto-ethnographic engagement and creation of a wiki as the beginnings of my own versions¹⁹, and through the process of the literature review. My own experience suggests that having a mentor-guide would have been helpful in making the travelogue feel less isolated as an activity, and more of a collegiate one. As noted above, under different circumstances I would have hoped to engage others in collaborative participation to enhance and further realise the potential of the wiki. However, my experience does indicate that this is just one format that could be used, and that the idea of the *itinerarium*, started early in the process of engaging with a professional *pathway* and culminating in the creation of a travelogue, is workable and productive. I was surprised that

¹⁹ A revised version of the 'Teacher Educator Professional *Pathway*' wiki can be found at <http://tedpatchworktextppv2.wikispaces.com/>, with permissions.

even as a 'baby-boomer' or member of 'generation X', the format of the wiki was accessible and particularly suited to the task because of its 3-dimensionality as a hypertext. However, it also seemed, through my experimentation, that paper-copy, found-objects and more traditional book-style, or journal-based travelogues would also prove suitable formats.

In terms of portfolio working and preferred approaches to participation the overriding impression, following interpretation of the findings, is that this needs to be flexible enough for individual participants to select their own format for the *itinerarium*, for travelling along their own *pathways*, and for the creation of their own travelogue. In terms of how participants might approach the process as a journey, the key ideas can be summarised as being that the experience is improved through sharing ideas, but that the authority to make decisions within the framework stays with the participant. The need for collegiality may be particularly important at the start of a journey, when there may be more unknowns, but the usefulness of working co-constructively, and a supervising mentor-guide, may help through a greater sense for shared enterprise whilst retaining authority over the process. With regard to the forms of communication, this should be negotiated with the mentor-guide so that both parties are able to access the mode selected, with confidence. Apart from that, communication might be through a range of channels and a variety of people, but always with a focus on professional dialogue. And, considering the findings above, it is recommended that a participant working solely with one other person is to be avoided. Even though there may be additional challenges with coordinating

collaborative working, it seems that the benefits are seen as outweighing the difficulties. This is highlighted when considering the view that reflection can be collegiate, not just a solo activity, and recognising the desire for a discursive and dialogic celebration of good practice - resulting in praxis. There is an important link to be made here, for participants and their guides, to Timperley's findings that collegiate working improved through using a process of 'appreciative enquiry' (Timperley, 2011, p.118) (Section 1). A cooperative, encouraging approach to professional knowledge-sharing, would appear to be entirely suited to developing a culture of collaborative and co-constructive professional learning experiences for teachers and teacher educators, alike (Section 1). The portfolio itself could comfortably be designed using any one of a range of possible formats and engagement with new and creative approaches. Audio recordings, images and blogs would simply add to the quality of the engagement with a professional *pathway* to support professional learning. The inclusion of critical incident analysis (Tripp, 2011) was strongly promoted through the interviews, and could be recorded and reflexively engaged with using a wide range of portfolio formats.

A portfolio format would be negotiated as part of the initial design ideas included in the *itinerarium*, so that there can be a clear understanding of how this might be assessed, or evaluated. This has particular importance where/if the professional *pathway* is going to be recognised outside of the circumstance of its creation by a participant, supported by at least one other person, and shared through professional dialogue. This project has suggested that the travelogue,

as representing the journey taken, could be ‘defended’ as at a *viva voce* instead of the participation in a *pathway* being assessed through the portfolio as a product. This approach could be adapted, with reference to the relevant national assessment framework for the level at which the participant is engaging with the process (Section 3).

f. Four-fold model

Having investigated the available literature, the inclusion of practitioner voice through interviews and piloting of a wiki as a *itinerarium* to be developed into a travelogue, it appears that the four-fold model, used as one of the principles for the framework of this project, remains generally intact (Exley, 2010). Through its addition on the question sheets shared with interviewees, some were prompted to respond and each time it was favourably, with one interviewee recognising the model from her own practice experience and discussion with colleagues.

Although, as a participant, I had a focus on my perceived loss of subject-specialist expertise (Section 1), a sentiment echoed by two of the experienced teacher educators interviewed, this is not necessarily the case for all practitioners. In fact, it has come to light that this shifting subject-specialist expertise is sometimes seen as a particular feature of practice in FE, with an expectation that specialisms change over time, according to need, and that practitioners reflexively engage with this – mindfully adapting and re-creating their professional identities.

Looking at the four-fold model, a revision following interpretation of the findings might lead to the following amendment (Appendix 6):

Teacher Educators in FE practices may be said to need not two, but four parts to their professional identity. Whether working with specialised or generic teacher education programmes, there is an expectation of: being a curricular **subject specialist** (for example in geography, engineering, beauty therapies, English language), but able to reflexively engage in unfamiliar disciplines as context requires; an **effective teacher** of adults and learners of all ages in a range of FE settings; a teacher whose explicit subject specialist knowledge, skills and understanding includes **Education as a field of study**; and also being a **researcher**.'
(Adapted from Exley, 2010, online)

7. Conclusion: how was the trip? Was it worthwhile, what went well, what could be done better... what's next...?

The intention of this project has been to review and examine the robustness and potential of a framework to support professional learning for teacher educators in FE practices (Exley, 2010; Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013). The essential question has been whether the proposed model of professionalism for teacher educators in FE practices, with its associated characteristics and qualities, is robust enough to form the basis of a framework when examined through interviews with practitioner participants, and through auto-ethnographic engagement with the framework as a *pathway*.

The framework for the *pathway* based on a four-fold model of professionalism and has identified underpinning principles, including *characteristics and qualities* used to question assumptions and raise awareness of practices (Exley, 2010). The purposes of the framework include the potential to enhance practice and promote professional recognition for teacher educators, focusing on FE practitioners and practices. Part of this research project has been to discern a deeper theoretical understanding of how teacher educators in FE can enhance practice through professional learning by offering a framework that has been created by and with practitioners, revised and moulded by their views and experiences. This investigation has reviewed, revised and developed the original framework design and principles to support engagement with processes of professional learning (Timperley, 2011). Three main perspectives have been taken when critically reviewing the model and principles, in line with ideas derived from Brookfield's lenses (1995; 2017): the available literature,

practitioner voice and auto-ethnographic engagement. In Section 5 this has been considered in greater detail, but one significant critique of this project could be that Brookfield's fourth perspective, that of the learner, is still missing from this research. In a future project I would hope to include the voice of the learners – the trainee teachers and experienced practitioners that teacher educators work with – to complete the examination of the framework as a theoretical idea and as a process in action.

As has been noted at particular stages in this thesis, there are further areas that should be researched in more detail if professional *pathways* are to be tested and examined for effective use in professional learning for teacher educators in FE practices. Notably, no men replied to the call for participants, or were identified through chain-referral sampling. This would suggest that purposive sampling is required to ensure that a more valid and authentic breadth of voices is heard.

Similarly, as has been noted in Section 4, there were no prospective teacher educator participants in this research. The contribution of this group is much needed for the establishment of a recognisable professional identity for teacher educators in FE, or in any sector. The voice of the prospective professional teacher educator will help root the experience of the journey in present and emerging practices, not just relying on existent perceptions of professional learning requirements for the sector.

To enhance the contribution of prospective, new or experienced teacher educators, a wider mix of participants is needed, and possibly a wider research project in conjunction with institutional or organisational support. For example, there could be a pilot study with a University, or with one of the professional associations noted in this research, e.g. TEAN or TELL. With the small numbers in this research group, despite being an emblematic case, there can only be recommendations and indications of significance. A wider participant group, over a longer period of time, and additional methods such as focus groups, could help strengthen the findings of this project and provide examples of formats and approaches across a more representative landscape.

By making use of new data from this research project, and a methodology of *creative praxis* (Allen, 2012; Crouch, 2007) (footnote 4 and Appendix 8), what has been arrived at is a revised model for the framework of a professional *pathway* that offers a workable, flexible and creative approach to professional learning. The theoretical framework for this project, reflected in the final model and design for professional *pathways*, has been one of transformative learning (Cranton, 1994, 2002; ; Mezirow, 1997), predicated on a constructivist epistemology and drawing on a reflexive ontology (Door, 2014). Although at an early stage, through this journey it appears that what has been arrived at is the basis for a framework that could support professional formation and development through professional learning.

From the perspectives offered here, the framework as proposed has been revised and developed further, although the figurative notion of the journey has

remained at the core, providing an illustration for both this research project and the form that professional learning could take if based on the framework as a professional *pathway*. What I would want to develop in the research now is a body of work that offers data from participants who have undertaken a *pathway* with working examples of the *itinerarium* and travelogue for review and co-operative and collaborative investigation. This could be undertaken as a co-operative enquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Heron, 1996; Ospina, El Hadidy & Hofmann-Pinilla, 2008; Summers & Cutting, 2016), or other action research project with an educational provider such as a University (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018; McNiff, 2016).

Research methods used in this project have effectively supported the idea that participation in a *pathway* could help provide answers to the two main concerns raised as drivers for this project. Firstly, participation in a *pathway* could help define the role of the teacher educator in relation to FE practices, supporting the development of a more widely recognised professional identity for teacher educators in FE practices. Secondly, it has shown to have the potential to support individual professional learning for practitioners. Through this project, for example, I have gained a better understanding of what I perceived to be a growing distance between my subject specialist knowledge and my current teaching practice; through a process of *creative praxis* I have been made aware of the potential of widening expertise and possible benefits and necessities of broadening and deepening my field of subject specialist knowledge and understanding.

The significance of collaboration and co-constructive working, and the recognition of shared values, has been upheld through these researches, which critically analyse the findings through an adaptation of Brookfield's lenses (1995) (Section 5). Similarly, the methodology underpinning this investigation, and the methods selected for data collection, have proved effective in creating a critical engagement with the themes.

As proposed, this project has also made use of the five characteristics from Lunenberg & Willemse' model for research with teacher educators (2006). It has maintained a 'focus on the unique practices of teacher educators and on the value of their personal experiences' and recognised and respected 'the (vulnerability of the) teacher educators involved' (*ibid.*, p.93). Throughout, efforts have been made to 'enhance collective learning through collaboration and joint reflection on the design of the study and, in a wider context, by writing for the community of teacher educators' (*ibid.*, p.93). And, 'when possible [...] theory to focus the study and to gain insight into the views and the behaviour of teacher educators' (*ibid.*, p.93). The remaining characteristic suggested by Lunenberg & Willemse - 'to enhance institutional learning by studying problems widely recognized in a teacher education institute and/or connected with the institute's standard tasks' (*ibid.*, p.93) - has been similarly addressed, but in terms of a wider field of professional practice, rather than at institutional level.

Regarding the format and presentation of the travelogue for a *pathway*, there is also now a second version of the wiki (footnote 20), based on the revised Itinerarium information sheet (Appendix 7), which is proving simpler to navigate and has also highlighted some minor matters which can be amended as a result²⁰:

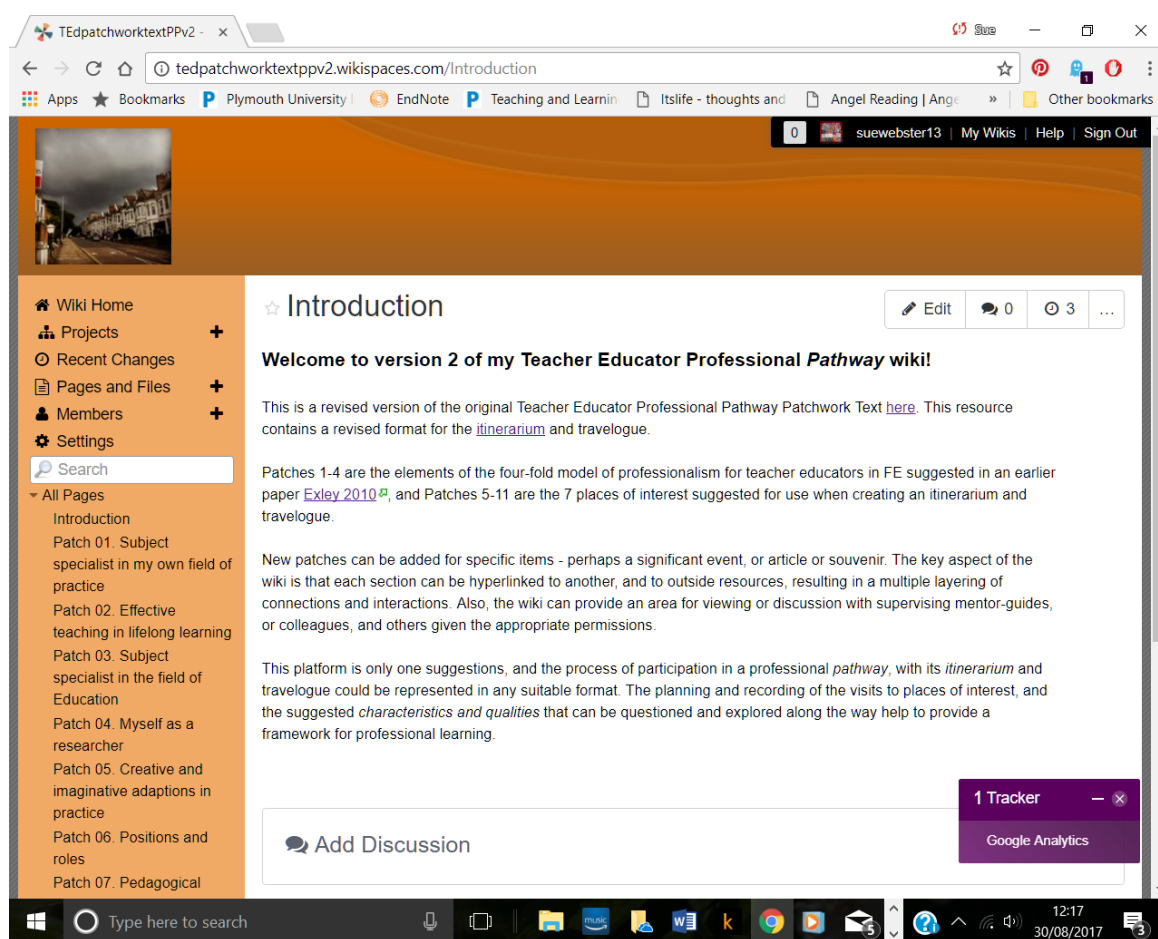


Figure 5. 'Teacher Educator Professional Pathway' wiki: version 2.

²⁰ For example, the word 'organisation' is used in two of the *places of interest*, which could cause confusion. It might be preferable to change these to: '... more than one educational organisation and more than one course...' and '... a range of societies, professional bodies and engagement with others...', for example.

However, what has also come to light is that the providers of the wiki software product used in this project, TES Global (2018; 2015), have decided to discontinue this service, which was free for educational use. However, through the research it has become apparent that other formats, including other digital ones such as blogs, would also be adaptable for the creation of a travelogue.

Having come this far in my own journey of discovery and professional learning, resulting in this thesis, I believe that the opportunity awaits for further adventures. Two paths are opening up that I would like to explore. Firstly, I would like to pilot the framework in full, with a group of colleagues from a wider variety of settings, of mixed gender, ideally including prospective and new teacher educators amongst that band of travellers. Initially, this group may have to be the supporting and supervising mentor-guides for each other, which would be in keeping with the co-constructive approach intended for engagement with *pathways*. There are, however, important questions that arise around commitment, funding, and matters of recognition and certification that have been touched on in the introduction. These would be a significant aspect of the planning and preparations for the next step in this exploration.

The second path opening up ahead, is that of further engagement with two main groups of fellow travellers noted in this project: the learners or students of practitioners on a *pathway*, and supervising mentor-guides (Section 3). Whether prospective, new or experienced practitioners in teacher education in FE (Section 1 and footnote 5), the relationships between the roles of teachers, teacher educators and learners will have an impact on the *pathway* experience,

as well as participation in a *pathway* having an impact on the teachers, teacher educators and learners in return. This reflexive aspect of a framework to support professional formation or development is very likely to be deeply significant to the whole experience, and is explicitly recognised in one of the *characteristics and qualities* as: a 'love' of teaching and respect for students (Section 3 and Appendix 8). Equally, the role of the supervising mentor-guide (Section 3) should not be underestimated in its importance and possible influence on the experience of participation in a *pathway*. Whether fellow travellers, guides or residents of the sites visited, each *pathway* will record and examine relationships with these populations, alongside the places where they are encountered.

This project has gone some way to evidence that the framework, in its revised form, now more convincingly upholds the definition offered of professional *pathways* as being: *professional and individual learning journeys supported by principles and research-based recommendations within a recognised framework of underpinning factors*. It has brought together literature from across the landscape of Education and beyond, entwined it with new knowledge gained from practitioners, and explored professional learning through auto-ethnographic engagement. Whether certificated, accredited or simply acknowledged, the hope is that travellers on a similar quest, having journeyed across the terrain of their own *Teacher Educator Professional Pathway* for FE (TEPP-FE), return to their career path having been made 'different' through that participation.

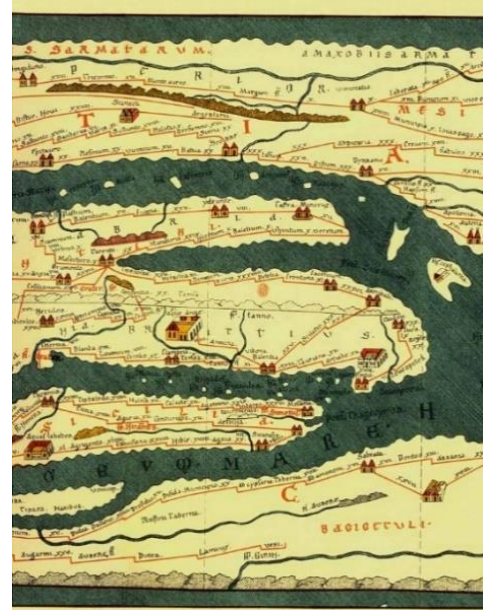
The thesis presented here is, in many ways, also a travelogue. It represents a journey. And this journey has resulted in a proposed framework to support professional learning for teacher educators in FE which has the potential to be transformative - for participants, their practices, and their students.

Appendices 1-9

Appendix 1 - Creating a professional *pathway*: your *itinerarium*.

This **professional *pathway*** is a purposeful and intentional engagement in a process of learning as *creative praxis*: of reflective, innovative thinking that has an impact on the world (Allen, 2012; Crouch, 2007). Whether prospective, new or experienced as a teacher educator, the aim is to arrive at journey's end with a **travelogue**. This travelogue will articulate your experiences and engagement with each of the areas of a **four-fold model** for professional teacher educators (Exley, 2010):

- as a subject specialist in your own field of practice
- an effective teacher in lifelong learning
- a subject specialist in the field of Education
- as a researcher



Part of Tabula Peutingeriana, Konrad Miller's facsimile from 1887 ([Public Domain](#))

Each professional *pathway*, and the evidence gathered, is particular to you; the journey taken is yours. You will plan for, participate in and produce a record of your journeying through the areas of the four-fold model, supported by a framework comprising some *specified sites* to be visited and examined, and with *features* to look out for along the way. Together, the four areas of the model, *specified sites* and *features* form the common core that is the basis for each traveller's experience of the process.

The ***specified sites*** for the *pathway* are: length of time in the teaching profession; variety of posts held; involvement in curriculum development; associations with a range of organisations; extent of experience in/of teacher education (Exley, 2010). Each site you visit on the journey is a chance to engage in professional learning as you take time to evaluate progress and develop skills, knowledge and understanding.

In order to travel the distances involved, between *specified sites* there are likely to be ***stopping points*** which are an equally important part of the journey. As each site and *stopping point* is identified and visited you keep a reflexive record of the experience, reflecting on insights, events and souvenirs that represent your journeying, evaluating the plan as you go.

The **features** to look out for along the way (Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013) - help evaluate the effectiveness of your experience in terms of professional development. Although not an exclusive list, these *features* include:

- having good communication skills
- at least some knowledge of Education as a specialist subject
- some management experience, skills and knowledge (e.g. having been an Advanced Teacher Practitioner, or a course manager)
- good interpersonal and intrapersonal skills
- a diversity of teaching experience across levels, subjects, or contexts
- and a 'love' of teaching and respect for students

Your professional *pathway* will start with devising a plan or map in the form of an **itinerarium** to help structure your engagement in professional learning as a prospective or practicing teacher educator in Further Education.

Itineraria are early forms of maps used to plan for journeys. They are not physically or geologically accurate and could be seen as topological, rather than geographical. The intention of an *itinerarium* is to create a way of recording the visits to *specified sites*, *stopping points* and *features* along a journey travelled, with indication of the distances and times between them. The *itinerarium* provides enough information for a traveller to have a useful understanding of the nature of the journey, which places might be stopped at and in what order, when the journey might be completed by and therefore what preparations to make. So long as it can be shared with your mentor-guide and with others, as appropriate or relevant, during and at the end of the journey the form of your *itinerarium* is up to you: in list form, as text-based descriptors and instructions; an illustrated map of your travels; an electronic format, using online map-creating tools...

The manner in which you travel, identification of the *specified sites*, *features* and *stopping points*, and the form of the travelogue are all selected and negotiated by you within the framework. The level of engagement and of the materials you produce as evidence will be according to the level at which you wish to undertake the *pathway*. This will be reflective of the Qualification and Component Levels (Ofqual, 2015)²¹, and based on prior learning, qualifications and experience and agreed with your mentor-guide who, as in any such journey, will be able to offer support at points along the way (Campbell, 1949).

21

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/461637/qualification-and-component-levels.pdf

As a professional *pathway*, the journey will be completed within a specified period of time which you agree with your mentor-guide. Once you have an overall journey time period, you can then create your *itinerarium*. It is intended to be a flexible mapping of your journey that may change, but any changes will have consequences in terms of the overall time available and what can be achieved and will, therefore, need to be shared with your mentor-guide and anyone who might be impacted by the changes. All of the elements of the four-fold model and *specified sites* have to be visited at least once, and you may decide to return to some to review or enhance your experiences.

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Appendix 2 - Interview questions.

Teacher Educator Professional pathways in Further Education and Skills: a framework to support professional learning (2015-17).

Suggested questions to be considered in detail at interview:

Q 1 – Research from a paper by Exley & Ovenden-Hope (2013) suggested initial principles for a pathway, might combine these characteristics and qualities:

- having good communication skills
 - at least some knowledge of Education as a specialist subject
 - some management experience, skills and knowledge (e.g. having been an Advanced Teacher Practitioner, or a course manager)
 - good interpersonal and intrapersonal skills
 - a diversity of teaching experience across levels, subjects, or contexts
 - and a 'love' of teaching and respect for students
- a) Would you be able to prioritise key elements from this list?
- b) Would you want to add any further characteristics or qualities, or dismiss any of the elements listed above as being unrelated or lacking significance?

Q 2 - In the same paper, *milestones* were described as being useful to 'help guide the path of those teachers wishing to embark on the journey to become a teacher educator' (Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013, p.14).

These *milestones* or markers were:

- length of time in the teaching profession
 - variety of posts held
 - involvement in curriculum development
 - associations with a range of organisations
 - extent of experience in/of teacher education
- a) How do you understand the term *milestone*, in this context?
- b) Would you be able to prioritise from this list?
- c) Would you alter this list? Why?

Q 3 - How would you understand the term 'professional learning' and how might it relate to continuing professional development (CPD)?

Q 4 - If a framework was designed to support professional learning for teacher educators, as a professional *pathway**, would you prefer to undertake it in any or all of these approaches:

- a) Collaboratively with peers – participating with others, sharing work for feedback and review (Ovens, 2003)
- b) Independently from peers – participating alone
- c) Co-constructively with peers and those supervising/in support – participating with others, including shaping the process within a framework, through sharing experiences
- d) Any other approach or variation that you would prefer?

NB It is anticipated that all approaches would, nevertheless, include some supervision/support.

Q 5 – If this *pathway** was recognised through the creation of a portfolio, what features would you suggest to help evidence or represent the approach discussed in Q 4, appropriately and effectively?

**Defined here as professional and individual learning journeys supported by principles and research-based recommendations within a recognised framework of underpinning factors.*

Four-fold model of professionalism for teacher educators in FE practices:

‘Looking at these considerations, a Teacher Educator may therefore be said to need not two, but four parts to their professional identity. Even if working on generic teacher education programmes, there is an expectation of being: a curricular **subject specialist** (for example, in geography, engineering, beauty therapies, English language); an **effective teacher** in the LLS; a teacher whose explicit subject specialist knowledge and understanding includes **Education**; and also a **researcher**.’ (Exley, 2010, online)

Appendix 3 – Call for participants 26.1.2016

January 2016 - Call for participants in a research project focused on Teacher Educators working in in Post Compulsory Education & Training/Further Education & Skills

My name is Sue Webster and I am working on an Education Doctorate with Plymouth University. This research project aims to extend and complement existent and current research and is designed to investigate and develop professional learning for Teacher Educators in Post Compulsory/Further Education and Skills.

The intention of the project is to enhance practice and promote recognition of a professional identity for Teacher Educators in Post Compulsory Education & Training/Further Education & Skills. This research has received ethical approval and will be supervised as part of my Doctoral studies.

I am hoping to find participants who would be willing to be interviewed on at least two occasions, and possibly participate in a focus group, over the next 12 months. If you are new to being a teacher educator in this sector (having been in this role for under 3 years), or if you are more experienced (having been in this role for over 3 years) I would be very happy to hear from you, and to provide more detailed information on the project.

I would also like to hear from anyone who is a 'prospective' teacher educator in this sector; that is, any teachers in Post Compulsory Education & Training/Further Education & Skills who are hoping to be employed in teacher education, but are yet to secure a post or to have worked in a teacher education role. Please pass on my details (below) to anyone who might be interested in participating in this research project, and who could be described as a 'prospective' teacher educator.

The participant group will be small, between 6-9 people, and ideally be of people who have not worked with me as colleagues either at Plymouth University or with one of our partner Colleges.

I look forward to hearing from anyone interested in taking part in this project.

Thank you,

Sue Webster

Please contact me, as the Principle Investigator, for more information:

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Appendix 4 – Information Sheet

Information Sheet



Overview

This research project will aim to extend and complement existing and current research into the practice of Teacher Educators teaching in the Post-Compulsory Education & Training/Further Education & Skills sector. The focus is on the enhancement of practice and to promote the recognition of professional identity/ies for teacher educators working in Post Compulsory Education & Training/Further Education & Skills. The initial question is whether this can be achieved through engagement in processes of professional learning, as formation or development, in the form of professional *pathways**. It will revisit previous research undertaken by Exley & Ovenden-Hope (2010), and reconsider definitions and recommendations, as well as make use new data to develop those initial ideas.

Who are the participants?

Participants in the project (both for interviews and/or focus group) will all be related to the Post-Compulsory Education & Training/Further Education & Skills sector, and will be *prospective, new* (between 1-3 years in a teacher educator post) or *experienced* teacher educators (more than 3 years in a teacher educator post).

Who is leading the project?

The project is being led by Sue Webster. Sue has been a lecturer in Education at the University of Plymouth since 2001. This project is being undertaken as part of her studies towards a Professional Doctorate in Education and follows on from research undertaken for her Masters degree in Education, and from papers written on this topic published in 2010 and 2013.

Where will the research take place?

The interviews will be held either at Plymouth University or at a place more convenient for the interviewee, such as their place of work. In order to minimise inconvenience for participants, no meetings will be held away from sites of practice (i.e. where the participant is usually employed in practice) unless it is requested by the participant. The focus groups will be held at a mutually agreed site, as convenient for the participants involved as possible. If difficult to agree a place to meet, the focus groups will endeavour to meet through digital means such as video conferencing.

How much time will the events take, and how long will the project last?

Participation in the semi-structured interviews would be less than an hour, and any potential focus group will also be for a maximum of 1 hour.

Will there be the opportunity to discuss participation and contributions to data?

Yes, participants will have access to the transcripts to check for accuracy. To facilitate this process, participants will be sent a copy of their interview transcript and given a deadline by which they must respond – which will be 4 weeks after the date that the transcript is sent, and the exact date will be stated at the time. Any focus group attendees will have a transcript made available to them of that focus group in similar fashion, being sent a transcript with the request that any responses be returned within a 4 week deadline, the date to be confirmed at the time. Participants in the focus group will be made aware through the information sheet and consent form that it will not be possible to withdraw an individual's contribution from that data collection following review of the transcripts.

Who will be responsible for all the information when the study is over, how long will it be kept and where?

The Investigator, Sue Webster, will be responsible for the information, and all research data for this project will be kept securely for 10 years from the end of the project, and then destroyed. Interview data (audio and written records) will be kept as a primary data source once transcribed; if electronic it will be kept in personal, password secured areas on the University portals or, if paper-based or other format such as digital recordings or external memory storage, within a secure place at the University. The research project is expected to last until the summer of 2017.

How will the findings be made use of?

The findings are intended to be used primarily for a doctoral thesis, as well as for conference papers and/or articles to be submitted for publication to develop research from the previous publications, and to contribute to teacher educator professional development through the design and establishment of a recognised professional *pathway*.

How can I find out about the results of the study?

The final project/published findings will be made available through the thesis which will be available after the examination process has been completed.

Confidentiality and anonymity

Participation in the interviews is voluntary, and any information collected through these or the focus group will be anonymised. If anyone choosing to participate in the project through interview or as part of a focus group identifies themselves, an institution or organisation within their responses that information will be removed before data analysis begins, as well as any data that could lead to the identification of individuals, organisations or institutions – this will be assured through participant validation. Similarly, the significance and need for a commitment to keeping information on individuals gained through a focus group confidential will be emphasised at any and all meetings.

What if I change my mind during the study?

Participants in the interviews are free to withdraw from the study at any time up until the data analysis without having to provide a reason for doing so. In addition there will be the opportunity to add, edit or withdraw contributions if identifiable to the respective participant: to facilitate this process, participants will be sent a copy of their interview transcript and given a deadline by which they must respond – which will be 4 weeks after they date that the transcript is sent – exact date will be stated at the time. Any focus group attendees will have a transcript made available to them of that focus group, in similar fashion: being sent a transcript with the request that any responses be returned within a 4 week deadline, the date to be confirmed at the time. Participants in the focus group will be made aware through the information sheet and consent form that it will not be possible to withdraw an individual's contribution from that data collection following review of the transcripts.

If you wish to participate please complete the relevant consent form for the interviews and/or focus group.

Complaints: All complaints from the participants are in the first instance to be directed to the Faculty Research Ethics Committee.

Please contact the Principle Investigator, or her supervisor/Director of Studies, for more information:

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**Defined here as professional and individual learning journeys supported by principles and research-based recommendations within a recognised framework of underpinning factors.*

Appendix 5 – Original principles and definitions used as the basis for this project

Principles based on the original papers by Exley (2010) and Exley & Ovenden-Hope (2013) are:

Six characteristics and qualities

- having good communication skills
- at least some knowledge of Education as a specialist subject
- some management experience, skills and knowledge (e.g. having been an Advanced Teacher Practitioner, or a course manager)
- good interpersonal and intrapersonal skills
- a diversity of teaching experience across levels, subjects, or contexts
- and a 'love' of teaching and respect for students

Five *milestones*

- length of time in the teaching profession
- variety of posts held
- involvement in curriculum development
- associations with a range of organisations
- extent of experience in/of teacher education

Four-fold model of professionalism for teacher educators in FE practices (Exley, 2010, online):

'Looking at these considerations, a Teacher Educator may therefore be said to need not two, but four parts to their professional identity. Even if working on generic teacher education programmes, there is an expectation of being: a curricular **subject specialist** (for example, in geography, engineering, beauty therapies, English language); an **effective teacher** in the LLS; a teacher whose explicit subject specialist knowledge and understanding includes **Education**; and also a **researcher**.'

Three categories of teacher educators (Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013):

Prospective, New (between 1-3 years in a teacher educator role) or
Experienced teacher educators (more than 3 years in a teacher educator role).

Appendix 6 – Revised principles and definitions arising from this project

Principles based on the original papers by Exley (2010) and Exley & Ovenden-Hope (2013), **revised using the findings from this project**:

There are **eight characteristics and qualities** that participants are asked to become more aware of when journeying into, and around, the landscape of teacher education in FE practice. Participants, as travellers along a *pathway*, would be expected to look out for, record and respond to their observations by asking the following questions:

- Is practice underpinned by a **love of teaching and respect for students**?
- Do I have **good communication skills, including e-communication skills**?
- Do I show a willingness to engage in gaining both practice-based and theoretical knowledge, understanding and skills and a readiness to develop **theoretical knowledge of Education as a specialist subject**?
- Am I seeking to gain experience, skills and knowledge of working with adults through **engagement with roles that include responsibilities for the support and/or management of others and of myself as a professional practitioner**, in addition to quality management or operational issues?
- Do I exercise good **interpersonal and intrapersonal skills** and a willingness to **challenge pre-conceptions effectively, recognising and celebrating individual needs and profiles** in a diversity of practice experiences across levels, sectors, subjects, or contexts? Is this solely through instruction, or also through modelling, with an emphasis on teacher *education*, not only on teacher *training*?
- Am I **resilient as a professional practitioner**?
- Am I willing to **question and challenge practices through critical thinking**, engaging with cross-disciplinary practices? Am I able to link this idea to the promotion of a reflexive and adaptable approach to professional practice as a response to the diversity, complexity and variety within sectors?
- Am I ready and willing to **research alternative pedagogic practices, as well as my own subject specialism/s**?

There are **7 places of interest** to include, but not be limited to, when planning the itinerary:

- **Identifiable, creative and imaginative adaptations in practice** that have a positive impact, gained through a breadth of teaching and learning experiences
- **A range of positions and roles**, recognising the tensions and opportunities that can come with associated responsibilities

- **Involvement with more than one organisation and more than one course**, comparing and contrasting pedagogical practices embedded in the curricular experience and gaining insight into how programmes and organisations function
- **Association with a range of organisations, professional bodies, and engagement with others** through, for example, conferencing, secondments, online communities and professional networks, engagement with other sectors and with alternative practices to enable professional development through professional dialogue

Some experience of programmes that have included adult learners

Dedication to, and interest in, teacher education as a field of practice, with some understanding and theoretical knowledge of teacher education practices, such as learning theories and models of reflective practice

Demonstration of an inclusive approach, and some understanding and knowledge of student diversity, equality and difference – with an emphasis on keeping a direct link between becoming/being a teacher educator and the students who are sharing that journey.

Four-fold model of professionalism for teacher educators in FE practices now reads:

Teacher Educators in FE practices may be said to need not two, but four parts to their professional identity. Whether working with specialised or generic teacher education programmes, there is an expectation of: being a curricular **subject specialist** (for example in geography, engineering, beauty therapies, English language), but able to reflexively engage in unfamiliar disciplines as context requires; an **effective teacher** of adults and learners of all ages in a range of FE settings; a teacher whose explicit subject specialist knowledge, skills and understanding includes **Education as a field of study**; and also being a **researcher**.'

(Adapted from Exley, 2010, online)

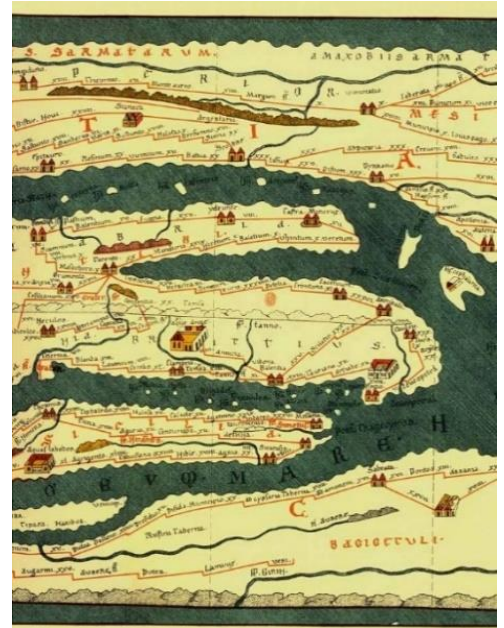
Three categories of teacher educators (Exley & Ovenden-Hope, 2013), remain unchanged following interpretation of the findings:

Prospective (not as yet in a teacher educator role), *New* (between 1-3 years in a teacher educator role) or *Experienced* teacher educators (more than 3 years in a teacher educator role).

Appendix 7 – Revised *itinerarium* information sheet.

This **professional pathway** is a purposeful and intended engagement in a process of learning as **creative praxis**: of reflective, innovative thinking that has an impact on the world (Allen, 2012; Crouch, 2007). Whether prospective, new or experienced as a teacher educator, the aim is to arrive at journey's end with a **travelogue** and having created an **itinerarium**. This travelogue will articulate your experiences and engagement with each of the areas of a **four-fold model** for professional teacher educators (Exley, 2010):

- as a subject specialist in your own field of practice
- an effective teacher in lifelong learning
- a subject specialist in the field of Education
- as a researcher



Part of Tabula Peutingeriana, Konrad Miller's facsimile from 1887 ([Public Domain](#))

Each professional *pathway*, and the evidence gathered, is particular to you; the journey taken is yours. You will plan for, participate in and produce a record of your journeying through the areas of the four-fold model, supported by a framework comprised of specified **places of interest** to be visited and examined, and with possible **stopping points** and features to look out for along the way. You will show your awareness of, and engagement in developing, relevant **characteristics and qualities** that are helpful to a traveller crossing this terrain. Together, the areas of the four-fold model, *places of interest* and *characteristics and qualities* form the common core that is the basis for each traveller's experience of the process.

There are 7 *places of interest* to include when designing the *itinerarium*:

- **Identifiable, creative and imaginative adaptations in practice** that have a positive impact, gained through a breadth of teaching and learning experiences
- **A range of positions and roles**, recognising the tensions and opportunities that can come with associated responsibilities
- **Involvement with more than one organisation and more than one course**, comparing and contrasting pedagogical practices embedded in the curricular experience and gaining insight into how programmes and organisations function

- **Association with a range of organisations, professional bodies, and engagement with others** through, for example, conferencing, secondments, online communities and professional networks, engagement with other sectors and with alternative practices to enable professional development through professional dialogue
- **Some experience of programmes that have included adult learners**
- **Dedication to, and interest in, teacher education as a field of practice**, with some understanding and theoretical knowledge of teacher education practices, such as learning theories and models of reflective practice
- **Demonstration of an inclusive approach, and some understanding and knowledge of student diversity, equality and difference** – with an emphasis on keeping a direct link between becoming/being a teacher educator and the students who are sharing that journey.

Each site you visit on the journey is a chance to engage in professional learning as you take time to evaluate progress and develop skills, knowledge and understanding.

In order to travel the distances involved you are likely to use *stopping points* between *places of interest*, which are an equally important part of the journey. As each site and *stopping point* is identified and visited you keep a reflexive record of the experience, reflecting on insights, events and souvenirs that represent your journeying, evaluating the plan as you go.

There are 8 **characteristics and qualities** that participants are asked to become more aware of through journeying across the landscape of teacher education in FE practice. Although not an exhaustive list, participants as travellers along a *pathway* would be expected to look out for, record and respond to their observations by asking the following questions:

- Is practice underpinned by a **love of teaching and respect for students?**
- How effective are my **communication skills, including e-communication skills?**
- Do I willingly engage in gaining practice-based and theoretical knowledge, understanding and skills; do I show a readiness to develop **theoretical knowledge of Education as a specialist subject?**
- Am I actively seeking experience, skills and knowledge of working with adults through **engagement with roles that include responsibilities for the support and/or management of others and of myself as a professional practitioner**; should this extend to quality management or operational issues?

- Do I exercise effective **interpersonal and intrapersonal skills** and a willingness to **challenge pre-conceptions effectively, recognising and celebrating individual needs and profiles** in a diversity of practice experiences across levels, sectors, subjects, or contexts? Is this solely through instruction, or also through modelling, with an emphasis on teacher *education*, alongside teacher *training*?
- Am I **resilient as a professional practitioner**?
- Am I willing to **question and challenge practices through critical thinking**, engaging with cross-disciplinary practices? Do I promote a reflexive and adaptable approach to professional practice as a response to the diversity, complexity and variety within sectors?
- Am I ready and willing to **research alternative pedagogic practices, as well as my own subject specialism/s**?

Your professional *pathway* begins with an initial plan – the beginnings of your *itinerarium* and travelogue. This helps to structure your navigation of the processes of professional learning, whether as a prospective or practicing teacher educator in Further Education.

Itineraria are early forms of travel maps. They are not physically or geologically accurate and could be seen as topological, rather than geographical. The intention of an *itinerarium* is to create a way of recording the visits to *places of interest*, *stopping points* and features along a journey travelled, with indication of the distances and times between them – actually or figuratively. The *itinerarium* provides enough information for a traveller to have a useful understanding of the nature of the journey: which places might be stopped at and in what order, when the journey might be completed by and therefore what preparations to make. So long as it can be shared with your supervising mentor-guide, and with others as is relevant, during and at the end of the journey the form of your *itinerarium* is up to you: it might be in list form as text-based descriptors and instructions; an illustrated map of your travels; an electronic format, using online map-creating tools... you decide.

The manner in which you travel, identification of the *places of interest*, *stopping points* or features and the form of the travelogue are selected and negotiated by you within the framework. The level of engagement and qualities of the materials produced as evidence will be according to the level at which you wish to undertake the *pathway*. This will be reflective of the Qualification and Component Levels (Ofqual, 2015)²², and based on prior learning, qualifications and experience and agreed with your supervising

22

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/461637/qualification-and-component-levels.pdf

mentor-guide who, as in any such journey, will be able to offer support at points along the way (Campbell, 1949).

As a professional *pathway*, the journey will be completed within a specified period of time which you agree with your supervising mentor-guide. Once you have an overall journey time period, you can then further develop your *itinerarium*. It is intended to be a flexible mapping of your journey and so may change, but any changes will have consequences in terms of the overall time available and what can be achieved and will, therefore, need to be shared with your supervising mentor-guide and anyone who might be impacted by the changes. The travelogue should provide an account addressing the elements of the four-fold model, *places of interest*, and demonstrate your awareness of the suggested *characteristics and qualities*, all of which will have been visited at least once - and you may decide to add your own *places of interest*, returning to some to review or enhance your experiences.

Resources:

- Allen, B. (2012) 'Creative praxis: A methodology for researching teaching in higher education as critical and creative practice'. AARE 2012: Australian Association for Research in Education National Conference. Sydney: 1 December 2012. (Accessed: 22 July 2016).
- Campbell, J. (1949) *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*. New York, USA: MJF Books.
- Crouch, C. (2007) 'Praxis and the reflexive creative practitioner'. *Journal of Visual Art Practice*, 6 (2). pp 105-114.
- Exley, S. (2010) 'Dealing with change: Teacher Educators in the Lifelong Learning Sector'. *Teaching in lifelong learning: a journal to inform and improve practice*, 2 (2). pp 24-34.
- Exley, S. & Ovenden-Hope, T. (2013) 'Preparing a Pathway of Professional Development for Teacher Educators in the Lifelong Learning Sector'. *Teacher Education Network (TEAN) Journal* 5(2). pp 4-18.6

Appendix 8 – Legend.

Creative praxis - Its definition in this text is the author's and is used to identify practices and approaches *where reflexive, innovative thinking and impact on the world are equally important*.

FE/HE/compulsory education sector - Throughout this piece practices in schools for children of the government's required participation age, currently up to their 18th birthday (Department of Education (2015) 2010-2015 government policy: young people. Department of Education) will be referred to as the compulsory sector; practices involving the further education colleges and related practice areas will be referred to as Further Education (FE); and practices involving universities will be referred to as Higher Education (HE). Although PCET and Post-16, Lifelong Learning are common terms for education outside of that offered by schools, covering a broad range of post-compulsory education and training practices, these will only be used where they are cited from other sources.

Four-fold model - This is a model of professionalism for teacher educators in FE practices (Exley, 2010), the four elements identifying a teacher educator being: 'as a curricular subject specialist (for example, in geography, engineering, beauty therapies, English language); as an effective teacher in the LLS; as a teacher whose explicit subject specialist knowledge and understanding includes Education; and also as a researcher' (Exley, 2010, online).

Grand Tour - Throughout the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries the Grand Tour was popular with those who could afford it; wealthy, or sponsored, young people would follow a route of discovery. This became more widely accessible, although still somewhat exclusive, with the advent of affordable travel and the rise in tourism for more than just the gentry towards the end of the 19th century (Black, 2003). On a Grand Tour the traveller would see for themselves the paintings, architecture and sculpture, hear the music and languages and, to some extent, meet the cultures and people that were outside of their lived experiences to date. Key elements have been selected from the Grand Tour in this *pathways* project where they make a significant contribution to its purpose of providing a framework to support professional learning for teacher educators in FE.

Hypertext - Jackson's was an early example of a hypertext and I found it frustrating and exciting in equal measure – but it remains with me as my first point of contact with a new way of 'reading' and contributed significantly to the format of my Masters dissertation (Jackson, 1995; Rettberg Walker, ND). A hypertext allows movement across and through a digital text in a non-linear form using digital tagging and hyperlinks.

Itinerarium - An itinerarium is an ancient form of topological map (Davis, N.D.; Dilke, 1987) and where the term *itinerarium* has been italicised it refers to the particular form used for this project described in detail in Section 4.b and Appendix 1. These maps were, essentially, ways to examine what the chosen route might be thereby allowing for the detailed planning required when moving a large imperial entourage through familiar, or unfamiliar, territory making use of 'appropriate staging posts' (Dilke, 1987, p.235). The Roman Empire found the need to provide accurate representations

became particularly pressing when travelling through war zones. Dilke quotes from a translation of an ancient Roman text to illustrate this point:

In fact, we are assured that the more careful commanders had, for provinces in which there was an emergency, itineraries that were not merely annotated but even drawn out in color [*picta*], so that the commander who was setting out could chose his route not only with a mental map but with a constructed map to examine. (*ibid.*, p.237).

As the empire became increasingly Christo-centric these itineraria also gained popularity as geographical guides for use by pilgrims as for merchants as nautical charts (Dilke, 1987). The skills in mapmaking remained in use as empires rose and fell, with many of these ancient maps being copied, recopied and adapted from their original design as far back as the first century A.D. (Davis, N.D.).

Images or 'icons' such as those figured in the *Peutinger* map have been used to represent cities, mark sites of long-disappeared features and record types of building and settlement on the journey. Interestingly, versions of this map, intended for very long journeys and with information to assist the practical needs of the traveller, record 'small places' (Dilke, 1987) and include references to places noted in other texts such as the Christian Bible and yet do not always mark larger roads known to exist at the time of copying. Although this could be seen as problematic, could it also mean that these were copies made for specific journeys, not always meant to be 'complete', but rather intended for individual expeditions?

Lunenberg & Willemse' five characteristics of research with teacher educators (Lunenberg & Willemse, 2006, p.96) -

- 'A focus on the unique practices of teacher educators and on the value of their personal experiences. [...]
- Respect for the (vulnerability of the) teacher educators involved. Efforts should be made to involve them in the problem definition, in conducting parts of the research and/or in reflecting on the findings.
- Efforts to enhance collective learning through collaboration and joint reflection on the design of the study and, in a wider context, by writing for the community of teacher educators.
- Efforts to enhance institutional learning by studying problems widely recognized in a teacher education institute and/or connected with the institute's standard tasks.
- When possible, the application of theory to focus the study and to gain insight into the views and the behaviour of teacher educators.'

Mentor-guide – This role is derived from Campbell's notions of the mentor-guide (1949) (see Section 3) and is likely to include a supervisory aspect, when needed, if the *pathway* is to contribute to professional recognition. If in the role of supervisor, the mentor-guide should be mindful of this as a collegiate relationship, and of Campbell's notion of the mentor-guide as being a provider, a guide who has oversight, rather having a controlling or didactic role.

Professional *pathway/pathways* – The term *pathways* is used throughout this project as the generic term for the framework as proposed, and *pathway* when identifying a specific example of the process. In either case the term is italicised to signify its

particular use and definition as: professional and individual learning journeys supported by principles and research-based recommendations within a recognised framework of underpinning factors (see abstract information, and further discussion in this Section 1).

Professional formation - For clarity and consistency, professional formation refers to those in the process of professional recognition and professional development refers to professional learning during that time and as an ongoing process once professional status or recognition has been achieved: Education and Training Foundation (2016b) 'Supporting you - The Education and Training Foundation'. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.et-foundation.co.uk/supporting/> (Accessed: 26 May 2017)

Professional learning - For the purposes of this project, professional learning is understood to be a process of *supporting professional practice* throughout the professional life of the teacher educator – prospectively, as well as for new and experienced practitioners - not solely a *preparation for* professional practice.

PTLLS - *Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector*. A programme designed to be an introduction to teaching qualifications for FE settings which has now been superseded by the *Award in Education and Training* <https://www.feAdvice.org.uk/i-am-ite-provider-etf-guidance-documents/qualifications-education-and-training> (Accessed: 26 May 2017)

Teacher educator - For this project the definition of 'teacher educator' is used, arrived at in previous research by Exley and Ovenden-Hope: 'Teacher educators are not only the 'teachers of teachers who are engaged in the induction and professional learning of future teachers through preservice courses and [...] in-service courses' (Swennen and van der Klink, 2009:29), but also those involved in mentoring, instructing and supporting the professional development of practicing teachers outside of a formal course or programme of study.' Exley, S. & Ovenden-Hope, T. (2013) 'Preparing a Pathway of Professional Development for Teacher Educators in the Lifelong Learning Sector'. *Teacher Education Network (TEAN) Journal* 5(2), pp. 4-18.12.

For clarification, the terms prospective, new and experienced teacher educators refer to the categories used in the research underpinning two papers, Exley (2010) and Exley & Ovenden-Hope (2013), where prospective teacher educators were those not yet in post, new teacher educators had up to 3 years of experience in-post, and experienced teacher educators over 3 years' experience in post. The classification for 'new' teacher educators as being up to 3 years in role is echoed by advice offered to prospective participants in the workshops run through the TEAN conferences (University of Cumbria/TEAN, 2017)

Wiki - Wheeler uses the term 'wiki', and this is used throughout the project for wiki-style websites as 'collaborative online spaces where multiple users can create, edit and share content' further demonstrating the constructivist, yet individualised, potential of this format (Wheeler, 2015, p.127).

Appendix 9 – Pen portraits

As discussed in the text, all participants were volunteers from the South West, South East and West Midlands areas of the UK, and female. In keeping with the figurative themes in this research project – of travelling and journeying – the names are all derived from those of historical women travel writers (Amoia & Knapp, 2006). The aim is not to identify the historical person exactly with the people to whom the pseudonym has been attributed, but to provide them with a presence that a coded identification might lack.

Pandita - An *experienced* teacher educator with over 22 years' experience in a teacher educator role. Pandita has worked extensively within the Further Education and Higher Education sectors on City and Guilds as well as PGCE and Cert Ed programmes, with full-time and part-time trainees. She taught science in Further Education, later gaining a Doctorate in Education. Pandita's interests include the professional knowledge within post-compulsory teacher education, and the debate around vocational versus academic pedagogy.

Daisy - An *experienced* teacher educator of over 6 years' experience in a teacher educator role. Daisy has taught in Post-Compulsory Education for 10 years, of which several have been teaching on *Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector* (PTLLS) and *Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector* (CTLLS) courses, as well as part-time PGCE and Cert Ed programmes in FE. She taught in Further Education settings, and is currently studying for a Doctorate. One of Daisy's particular areas of interest is mentoring.

Cristina – A *new* teacher educator, Cristina has worked in various contexts, including Further Education, sixth form colleges and schools but at the time of interview had been delivering teacher education programmes for Further Education at HE and FE level for less than 3 years. One of Christina's particular areas of interest is mentoring.

Val - An *experienced* teacher educator of over 6 years' experience in a teacher educator role, Val has taught and managed teacher education programmes in both Further Education and work-based learning. She has lived and worked in Europe and South America, moving into education and health training. Val is currently studying for a Doctorate. Her varied interests include learning technology and its role in lesson observations.

Ruth – A *new* teacher educator, with less than one year's experience at the time of interview. She trained as a school teacher and has worked with a wide range of age groups and classes. Ruth was the youngest interviewee, with the least experience in a full teacher educator, or with teaching adults.

Karen - An *experienced* teacher educator of over 12 years' experience working in Higher Education and Further Education and of working with new and trainee teachers and supporting colleagues. Karen was contacted through personal communication, and it was anticipated that she might be identified as being a *prospective* teacher educator, but Karen identified as an *experienced* teacher educator, supported by the definition given for this research project. Her pedagogical interests include developing student engagement and innovative approaches to teaching.

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